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PARENTS AND THEIR PROBLEMS

A SYSTEMATIC COURSE

IN

CHILD MEDICINE

BY DR. J. H. HARRIS, M.D.

THE American Association of Child Health has been one of the most active forces in the world for the improvement of child health. It has been the first to recognize the importance of child health and to have organized a systematic course in child medicine. This course is the first of its kind in the world and is the only one of its kind in the United States. It is the only one of its kind in the world and is the only one of its kind in the United States. It is the only one of its kind in the world and is the only one of its kind in the United States.



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IN MOTHERLY MEDITATION

Van Millet, 1864—, U. S.



THE American Madonna sits beside the cradle of the little one in quiet, ready patience, looking at her baby with simple worship and belief. What the old masters saw in the face of Mary, the modern artist sees in every mother; but the new Madonna has no fear or trouble in her eyes—only confidence that by patient effort she can rear her child to be, in his small way, a savior of the world.

PARENTS AND THEIR PROBLEMS

A SYSTEMATIC COURSE IN CHILD NURTURE

EDITED BY

MARY HARMON WEEKS

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FOREWORD



DIFFERENT parents are reached by wholly different aspects of the same problem in child training, and are influenced by different points of view, and study circles require varying degrees of scientific presentation. The editor, therefore, often presents several expert discussions of a single problem, as in the case of the articles on discipline. No one writer can cover all the ground of any vital question, and it is hoped that by giving a number of approaches to the same problem, sufficient variety is gained, even though this involves some repetition of basic principles.

QUOTATIONS

"What we need, and what we are going to get, is a better balanced system of child culture, that will take the child as he is, and our complex civilization as it is, and harmonize and adjust the two in a humane, and scientific manner."—*"Hygiene and Physical Education."*

"He who helps a child helps humanity with a distinctness, with an immediateness, which no other help given to human creatures in any other stage of their human life can possibly give again."—*Phillips Brooks.*

"Some children brood silently for years over questions which they do not themselves originate, but which once put into their minds recur again and again, and when put into articulate form are met only with the unsatisfactory answer, 'You aren't old enough to understand it yet.' Those who remember their own childish puzzles will also remember the vague feeling of injury which such an answer roused."—*Unknown.*

"These are such dear familiar feet that go
Along the path with ours; feet fast and slow,
And trying to keep pace. If they mistake
And tread upon some flower we would take
Upon our breast, or bruise some reed
Or crush poor Hope until it bleed,

 We should be mute.
Not turning quickly to impute
Grave fault, for they and we
Have such a little way to go: can be
Together such a little while along the way,
We must be patient while we may."

I

CHILD STUDY FOR PARENTS IN ITS BEARING ON CHILD WELFARE

ELIZABETH CHERRILL BIRNEY

First Editor of the Child Welfare Magazine



E speak lightly of child welfare often without realizing that it is world welfare—that every line of human endeavor, every effort for social betterment, is embraced in it. We grasp the importance of this better if we state it conversely. All social problems would be solved if ideal training could be given every child in his own home.

It is to women chiefly that this training is intrusted. As teachers and mothers we do the great nurture-work of the world. It is given to us to guard and brood over growing life. We who go down into the dark with God to create life must travail in pain with that child over and over again before he is born into his full possibility as a human soul. We are co-creators with Almighty power and we must be co-workers with all the powers of good to make of that child the well-rounded man or woman. He is part of us, but he is far more; he is part of the world, part of all that is to be in ages after us.

More parents fail through a trivial conception of their task than through too high a one. If we really believed that the training of children is the most important work of the world, we would undertake to fit ourselves for it; moreover, society would see to it that such training was not left so largely to the inexperienced and the unfit. Whatever we may say

Child welfare
is world
welfare

The child a
part of the
world as well
as of the
family

Parental
failure
through
trivial
conceptions of
the task

with our lips, we do not now practically believe that the care and training of the young is the most tremendous task which can be intrusted to any human being.

Two factors are largely operative in hindering this belief. 1st, The stubborn self-satisfaction with which average men and women believe that they can manage their own children and have them turn out about as well as other people's children. 2nd, A deep-seated and rapidly growing feeling that wifehood and motherhood offer no scope for the powers of a woman of real talent or great energy. She must have special training for a career, while the woman of mediocre ability can without training undertake to marry, run a house, bear, train, feed and largely educate a family of future citizens on whom the welfare of the world depends.

The modern young woman who speaks with curling lips of being relegated to the kitchen and nursery has no true conception of the dignity of either, of the need for all her powers of mind, heart and body, all her knowledge and culture, if she is to wisely order a home and rear a family of children.

Child culture
the biggest
business

Like all professions, it requires breadth of vision, that she may view her own task in its relation to human life and human progress, and then the most careful and painstaking knowledge, for child-culture is the biggest business of life and should be learned as any other business. A woman, no matter what her previous education may be, must go to school again to physician and psychologist and educator to learn the laws which control the wonderful organism to which she has given life. If we have no right to undertake the building of strong and efficient bodies which shall stand the tests of modern living without

study of the laws of growth, of food values, of hygiene and sanitation, how much less have we the right to undertake character-building without studying the laws of a child's development, his recapitulation of the life of the race, his need for passing through these strange and soon outgrown stages, of the characteristics of adolescence and their relation to his whole future growth.

Love and patience and insight, combined with common sense, have enabled the men and women of the past to do much without special knowledge, but we can every one of us recall numerous instances of tragic failure of the old method or lack of method. Let the parents of the future keep their love, their insight, their sympathy; they will need them all, but let them add to these—knowledge—a study of modern educational problems, a vision of the goal for which they are striving—the kind of human-product they want to develop. Our old ideas have been all negative. We have kept looking at the faults of a child and thinking how we must uproot them, tear them out of his system. If the average parent were asked what kind of a child he was trying to develop he would probably give you a negative ideal, a person who did not possess this, that, or the other fault.

The faults of childhood are of two kinds: first, those which are in their nature temporary and belong to the period through which the child is passing, for instance, those faults of manners for which children are so often blamed or punished—noisiness, rudeness, untidiness, thoughtlessness—are inevitable if the child is to have actual contact with life, is to grow from an unfinished to a finished product. The child who is always quiet, gentle, polite and thoughtful is finished too soon; his development will cease before manhood or womanhood.

Love,
patience,
insight,
common sense
plus
knowledge

Childhood's
faults of two
kinds

The second kind of faults are much more serious, but they, too, are inevitable to the growing, incomplete creature struggling with a complex civilization. His character is still in the making and his ideas of truth, of honor, of property rights, are still chaotic. In all education we think too much of uprooting faults and too little of developing virtues. We must keep a child from lying or punish him for lying, we say, but we do not work enough to develop in him a love of truth, a realization of what truth and honor mean in human life and social relations.

As I rode past miles of young oak forest I noticed last year's leaves still hanging to the brown branches. Many of our educational methods, I thought, are as if some well-meaning person should spend days in plucking off these dead leaves instead of waiting until the life forces of a new spring had quickened the sap, when the dead leaves would fall unnoticed and, in the divine economy of Nature, even nourish the new growth pulsing through the tree. So will faults drop away from the human plant with the deepening of the life forces, with the development of character, with the growth of positive virtues.

Child-study is as well the most important, the most interesting of studies. History, biography, fiction, become contributing adjunct reading. We read them to find what developed the hero, the genius, the tyrant, the artist, the general.

The facts of heredity and early training take on a new significance, as we wonder if the children about the evening lamp may be turned into some of the paths that lead to greatness by our influence. And child-study has such wonderful human documents, such living material! Let us never fear that it is a narrow or belittling study. Culture through the

vocation is a modern phrase, and we need never fear that true culture will not come to the men and women who give their time and thought and effort to the study of the myriad problems of childhood.

With all our love and all our study we may fail. In any task we can but do our best. Many forces mold human life and character. But we must never cease to love, never cease to travail, never cease to hope and believe until we see the point of our labors. "Train up your children," says Lyman Abbott, "not merely govern them, but train them in the way they should go and when they are old they will not depart from it; and if for a little time they may seem to do so, the mother-love, the father fidelity, the magnetism of never-forgotten home, will bring them back to life and to God again."

Train rather
than govern

II

BEGINNINGS OF PRESENT-DAY IDEALS IN TRAINING THE YOUNG

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IT may as well be acknowledged at the outset that many books have been written on child nature and training which, while of interest and value to a student of the history of education, yet would hardly repay a parent for the energy spent in their reading. On the other hand, there have appeared at different periods in the progress of the race a few great books with which every parent ought to be familiar. These are the books which have survived through the ages, and which seem almost as fresh and timely today as when they were written. This is, no doubt, due to the fact that they give expression to vital truths concerning childhood and education, and people in all times have appreciated their worth.

Many people who are familiar with the great writers and thinkers of all times regard Plato as the most eminent of them all. We often hear him referred to as the "Divine" Plato. Although he seems remote from us in time, those who know him through his works think he is about as modern as Mark Twain or Theodore Roosevelt. Probably in every community there are disciples of Plato who would regard his advice as better for every-day life

Plato the
most eminent
ancient writer

than that of any living writer. Even in the newest of the communities of the Far West, one finds persons who have chosen Plato as their counsellor and guide in respect to things of the spirit. However, the majority of people have not had an opportunity to become acquainted with Plato's thought, and so he is not much more than a name to them.

It is in no way necessary for our purpose definitely to locate Plato in educational history. It is enough to say that he lived and wrote in Athens about 2300 years ago. His native city had reached its zenith in thought and culture during his day. He himself was the most illustrious exponent of the life and ideals of the city. Among other things, he set himself the task of outlining a plan for the making of an ideal community in which the welfare of all its members should be best promoted. This plan was sketched out in his *Republic*. Its style has captivated people since his time, and this is probably one reason why even in our day it is regarded by many as one of the greatest books ever written. The principles it expounds are developed by means of dialogue, in which truths are made clear by questioning, until one who holds wrong views is led by his own thinking to discover his error, and to see the truth, as Plato perceived it.

In describing what is necessary for the making of an ideal community, Plato gave the first place to education. He described in some detail what he thought was essential in the training of a child, so that when he became a man he would make an intelligent and conscientious citizen. We have precisely the same aim before us to-day as Plato had. What would he think of our present methods of training for good citizenship?

Education
the first
requisite in
the making of
an ideal
community

What stories
should
children
hear?

First, Plato said great care should be taken with the sort of stories told to children. He would exclude all those which misrepresent nature or the gods. He thought stories describing ugliness or sensuousness in the gods would be exceedingly harmful to children. He said that in any community there must be proper persons appointed who should examine all books before the young should be permitted to read them, and only those stories should be given to children which depict courage and honesty and fearlessness in the doing of duty, even though death should result therefrom. Stories that make children afraid to die in a good cause should be barred from the home and the school. Stories which represent divine beings as given to anger or to revenge or to physical indulgence should be prohibited. Stories which represent great men as subject to cowardice, or weeping in the face of trials, or shrinking from hard or dangerous tasks, should be banished from the nursery and the schoolroom.

We have before us today exactly such a problem as Plato considered, for it is not clear to many parents that children should be allowed to read myths or fairy tales or fables, because these are not faithful to the order of nature. Plato, however, would not prohibit such stories, because he says that if they are *morally* true, even if they are not quite in accord with physical laws, children may read them. But Plato would want to be sure that the child would be helped morally by a myth or a fairy tale, or else it would be excluded from children's reading.

Modern
tales for the
young

It is interesting to inquire what view would be taken by Plato of our Mother Goose stories, or our old English folk tales, dealing with giants, ogres, and goblins. What would he say about "Alice in Won-

derland," "Robin Hood," "Æsop's Fables," and the like? Are we trying to observe Plato's advice by excluding from children's reading stories which tend to encourage cowardice or cruelty or dishonesty or meanness or licentiousness? Are we agreed today respecting the effect of different stories upon children? Many among us think that fables often teach deceit; that the fairy tales teach vanity and capriciousness; and that the old folk tales teach cruelty and bloodthirstiness. There are those who say that "Alice in Wonderland" has a bad effect upon the young, because it leads them to think nature is not law-abiding, and they come to view the world in a fanciful way. Again, one frequently hears it said that a tale like "Little Red Riding-Hood" makes children indifferent to cruelty; that it hardens them to the finer feelings.

It is not my intention to dogmatize on these difficult problems; but there is a certain point of view relating to this matter which may be of help to parents. Our ancestors in their efforts to comprehend and to adjust themselves to nature constructed all sort of notions about it, and then they elaborated tales which helped them to overcome their fears and perplexities. It is probable that the child in his development takes some such a view of the world around him as was taken at different stages in the development of the race. The tales told by our ancestors probably aided them to adapt themselves to nature, and it is likely that many of these tales will also help the child as he moves upward. The fairy tales and the folk tales present fanciful conceptions of nature, but at the same time they describe the happy outcome of honesty and courage and charity and clearheadedness in dealing with situations

The child
and the race

presented in every-day life. It is probable that the child who gains the view of nature given by the fairy tale will be none the less able to take the scientific view later on. In the same way it is probable that he will have greater confidence in nature in his maturity, if he has faced such situations in childhood as are presented in "Little Red Riding-Hood," "Bluebeard," and all the rest.

The child
must react
right

But it is necessary that the child should *come out right* after hearing these tales. If he be made afraid and be left in a state of terror, it is likely that he will be injured in his emotional life. If he be told fairy tales, and believe that nature is capricious in its processes, he will be injured in his intellectual life. It is a rather delicate matter to present these ancestral views of the world to children, and have the outcome be wholesome in every way. Harm may easily be done, just as children may be injured by telling them ghost stories, and leaving them in a frightened attitude toward unknown things about them.

It is probable that Plato would take some such a view as we have advanced of these tales, which have increased in number vastly since his day. When he wrote he had in mind only the tales told by Homer in the Iliad and the Odyssey, and by the poets who described the acts of the gods and the goddesses. But we of today have collected the tales told by peoples in all times, and we have put them in suitable form for our children. This simply means that we have an opportunity to give the young today all the points of view and the feelings regarding the world which were experienced by our ancestors from primitive beginnings to our own times.

After Plato expresses his views on the sort of stories which children should be allowed to read, he turns to the place of music in training the young. He thinks music exerts a deeper influence upon character than does any other branch of education; and this he ascribes to the fact that different melodies awaken characteristic emotions, and tend to establish habitual attitudes in us. Certain kinds of melodies, for instance, have a softening influence, and they develop in those who hear them sensuous feelings, so that they look only to their own indulgence, and lose their vigor and courage. Other melodies inspire heroism and fortitude. So each melody has its special effect upon the individual. What we ought to do, then, is to select from the entire list of available melodies those which strengthen character, which inspire reverence, and which dispel fear. Plato says we ought to banish all melodies as well as all musical instruments that do not awaken feelings of courage and heroism. It is probable that he would not permit children to hear waltz music. He would lay emphasis upon martial and sacred music, and melodies that suggest hope and good feeling.

The value
of music in
the child's
education

May we not gain a very useful lesson from Plato in respect to this particular matter? We have vastly greater opportunities to use music in education than the people had in Plato's day, but it is probable that we have not made the best use of this material. It is likely that the parent could influence his children beneficially by the use of different melodies. Doubtless all parents have observed that certain airs will quiet children; others will excite them; others will arouse them to effort; others will suggest sadness; still others will suggest brightness and good cheer; and so on through the whole category of emotions.

Should
children
become
acquainted
with evil?

One of the most helpful suggestions made by Plato relates to the influence upon the young of contact with evil. It is his view that whatever a child sees will exert an influence upon him. If he be in the presence of evil, he will be injured by it. He must be kept always in contact with what is good in morals as well as in art. Plato would not allow children to see evil with a view to educating them against it. He would not allow them to see ugliness in architecture or in pictures in order that they might by contrast be led to appreciate beauty.

There are many among us who think the best way to prevent a child's embracing evil is to show it to him, and warn him against it. Plato denounces this practice as strongly as he can, for he says the human mind is so constructed that it tends to assimilate what is presented to it. However, one might put a child in the midst of evil, but make good action so compelling that he would choose the latter, and the former would make no impression upon him. But this is an extremely difficult task, as we all appreciate in our practical dealings with the young, for we do not like to have our children grow up in the slums. It seems probable that Plato's view is for the most part based on sound principles of human nature.

Aristotle,
the chief
scientist of
ancient times

It is much debated in some places whether Plato or Aristotle has exerted the greater influence upon human thought. Happily, it is not necessary for us to take up this question here. It is enough to say that for many people Aristotle is the equal, at least, of Plato in the breadth and soundness of his thought, if not in the beauty of his expression. Aristotle was a contemporary of Plato, and so was familiar with the ideals and practices of Athens when it was at

the height of its culture and prosperity. But Aristotle's views were presented from a different standpoint than that taken by Plato. The latter was an idealist; he stood on the mountain-top, and looked down upon the drama of life. He was chiefly interested in what men ought to become, rather than in what they *actually are*, or really can be made to become. Many people hold high ideals by which they estimate human conduct, no matter whether these ideals can be attained or not. Such persons are more interested in ideal than in actual, every-day situations in life. In some such a sense as this Plato was an idealist.

Aristotle, on the other hand, was of a practical turn of mind. Plato abhorred science as dealing with material things, while Aristotle was pre-eminently a scientist. One may hear men say today that Aristotle was the greatest inductive scientist the world has seen. This type of mind can be satisfied only with real, concrete, demonstrable facts. It pleases such a one better to think in terms of *things* rather than of *abstractions*.

It is of importance to note that, although approaching the training of the young from such different viewpoints, Aristotle and Plato were agreed in respect to fundamental matters, such as were mentioned in presenting Plato's views. Aristotle's work came after and is much less complete than Plato's. His *Politics*, however, is devoted to a discussion of the same general theme as Plato's *Republic*,—the building of a republic in which justice shall prevail, and the welfare of each citizen be conserved and advanced to the highest degree. Like Plato, Aristotle appreciates that it is impossible to develop a sound, healthy community without an efficient system of education.

Agreement
of Plato and
Aristotle

Learn to do
by doing

Aside from the educational principles which he holds in common with Plato, there are three or four which are distinctly his own. He seems to have been the first writer to emphasize the doctrine that one can understand an art fully only by executing it. This doctrine might be otherwise stated, perhaps—*Learn to do by doing*. Aristotle, in discussing the teaching of music, says that a child should not only be taught to appreciate it, but he must also learn to *execute* it; for without the latter the former will be impossible. Our modern psychology and educational philosophy appear to endorse this general principle. We are just beginning to work it out in practice. It is probable that no intelligent parent today would expect a child to learn any activity or any object in an effective way unless he can actually handle the object, or perform the activity. Aristotle's principle was lost to the world for many centuries; and there are doubtless some persons among us who even yet do not appreciate its importance. But it can be said unqualifiedly that we are coming today to see that what a child can do he understands; and what he cannot do he has at best only obscure, imperfect notions of. To Aristotle belongs the credit of first stressing this principle in teaching the young.

Children
should not
be repressed

Aristotle developed another principle which, while he applied it to young children, has much wider application than he gave to it. He stated that when children screamed they should not be repressed, because screaming played an important rôle in their development. If a child wished to protest vocally against the order of things in his environment, Aristotle would let him cry out his tantrum. He thought evil humors might be drained out of the system by free expression. He extended this general doctrine to in-

clude the viewing of evil action on the stage. He said that if one were inclined to perform an evil act, his soul would be purged of the moral poison if he could see another perform it. We seem to be agreed in these days that some, at least, of the child's impulses which are not in harmony with his environment may best be curbed by providing opportunity for their expression rather than by rigidly suppressing them.

We may now glance at one or two important contributions which Plutarch made to our views of child nature and education. Plutarch lived seven hundred years after Aristotle. Greek life had changed a good deal during these seven centuries; but still the views of Plutarch are not essentially different in most respects from those of his two great countrymen. Doubtless every one is familiar to some extent with Plutarch's *Lives*, and to a less extent with his *Morals*. Those who are at all acquainted with Plutarch cannot fail to have appreciated the high character of his ideals. In his *Morals* he gives some attention to the subject of teaching, his aim being to show how a child can be trained so that he will have complete control of himself, and so that he can conform to moral and ethical law.

Plutarch's
views

From a number of educational principles which he advocated, we may select three only which perhaps are most characteristic of him. First, he complained about the practices of his time in respect to the choice of teachers for the young. The prevailing notion in those days was that persons who were incapacitated for other duties could be given the care of children. Plutarch expresses himself emphatically in condemnation of the small caliber of the teachers of his time. He pointed out that those who have

charge of the young during the first years of their life play the most important rôle in determining their character. Consequently, the teachers of the youngest children should be persons of the highest quality in respect to morals, to manners, and to all that may in any way influence the child. Plutarch's demand seems as important and timely today as it must have been when he first expressed it upwards of two thousand years ago.

As might be expected, Plutarch attached greater importance to example than to precept in teaching. In his opinion, the child gained more from the personality of his tutor than from what was actually taught him. This is why it is so important that care should be taken in the choice of teachers. We seem to think today that in reality one teaches more vitally through his own character and personality than he does through his formal instruction.

Plutarch
condemns
corporal
punishment

Plutarch's philosophy exalts gentleness in all the relations of life. When he comes to the subject of punishment, he cannot endure that a child should be struck for any reason whatsoever. Corporal punishment tends to brutalize a child, according to our author. It is probable that neither Plato nor Aristotle would hesitate to use the rod when it promised to save a child from acquiring habits which later would be of serious disadvantage to him. But Plutarch prohibits all forms of physical chastisement. He demands that teachers shall govern their children by gentler measures. There have been many since his day who have agreed with him, although the majority are on the other side. Even in our own day this is found to be true. But there seems to be a growing sentiment in favor of the restriction, at least, of the use of the rod in the training of the child.

Finally we may glance at the views of the most prominent Roman writer on education. Quintilian's life fell in between that of Plato and Plutarch. Of course, as a Roman he held a different philosophy of life from the typical Athenian. The subjects which engaged his attention when he discussed the training of children were for the most part different from those which attracted the Greeks. Plato and Aristotle were interested in early education because it was essential to the development and preservation of the republic. Plutarch was interested in it on account of its influence upon the moral development of the child. Now, Quintilian discussed the subject solely from the standpoint of one who was interested in the development of orators. Rome was mistress of the world in Quintilian's day, and she had need for statesmen and lawyers. The people of that day thought a good deal about the training of public speakers who could influence the people. Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory* was written for the sole purpose of showing what is essential in order to develop a really good orator. But an orator must be an all-around man. He cannot influence people unless he has a strong character, and unless he is intelligent. As a matter of fact, Quintilian's conception of the orator compelled him to consider the whole subject of education, from the very beginning up to maturity. His book, then, is devoted largely to a discussion of education, and it is the most elaborate work upon the subject written in ancient times.

The most
eminent
Roman
writer on
education

Quintilian starts out by saying that nature never produces dullards. If we knew how to treat all children we should never have any stupid or feeble persons. It is possible we might agree with Quintilian if we understood just the sense in which he

Nature does
not produce
dullards

intended we should take this statement. We are coming to believe that a good many children who are regarded as dullards would not be so at all if we understood how to reach them, or if we were provided with facilities so that we could call out their particular abilities. The educational magazines are constantly describing individual cases of children who have been saved from feeble-minded institutions because of the introduction of manual training, or science, or some other subject into the schools. It is unquestionably true that many backward children are so because of our inability, due either to lack of understanding or of opportunity, to awaken their minds.

At the same time, science appears to have shown that some children are born short, and no kind of education can overcome their natural deficiencies. Any educational theory which would keep such children in the schools as a handicap to normal children would be a serious menace to the highest efficiency in educational work. It is probable that in every community where there are two or three hundred school children, there will be several who cannot keep pace with their classmates because of a lack of mental vigor. It cannot be that Quintilian thought all children were endowed with equal mental powers.

One of the most important of Quintilian's principles relates to public education. In his day there was a tendency for parents to have their children educated privately by tutors. Quintilian saw that on the whole it was much better for a boy to be educated with other boys than to be brought up alone. He pointed out that emulation was perhaps the greatest spur to mental effort. A child educated apart from other children would necessarily miss the chief incentive to excel or, at least, to do as well as his asso-

ciates. Today we are committed to the principle of public education, though we have not solved all its problems. Often children of opportunity and ability are held back in order that they may keep pace with children deficient in ability and lacking in opportunity; and this is a disadvantage, alike to the individual and to the community. It would be better for everybody concerned if a pupil had opportunity to develop all his powers fully. But this is not always possible in our public schools. If we can keep the principle of public education, and at the same time prevent wasting the talents and energies of those whom nature has favored, we shall then have a method of carrying on the work of education which Quintilian first advocated.

While Quintilian would have children educated together, he would at the same time search out the particular abilities of each individual, and treat him according to his special needs. He denounces the plan of teaching children *en masse*. This is, of course, one of the greatest problems in present-day education. Quintilian's demand that attention should be given to individual needs is just as necessary and vital today as it ever was, and it will continue to be a harassing problem until we discover some way to keep account of the individual while training him in association with his fellows.

III

ROUSSEAU AND EDUCATION ACCORDING TO NATURE

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IN our day teachers are constantly told that they must follow nature in all their teachings. Much of our study of education has for its purpose to determine the *natural* order in the development of the child's abilities. We apparently feel that if we could conform to the plan of nature in all of our work, we would be able to teach our children more economically and effectively than most of us now do. One may hear it said repeatedly at every educational meeting he attends that much of the waste in teaching, and most of the difficulties and tragedies in discipline, are due to our ignorance of the child's *natural* tendencies, which many people interpret to be his *needs*. Present-day educational literature is full of the thought that the life of the home and the school-room would be much pleasanter for parent, teacher, and children if the work could be made to harmonize with the native tendencies of the young.

Rousseau was the first writer on education to exalt nature, and to attempt to elaborate an educational scheme based wholly upon the child's natural tendencies. The saying, "Education according to nature," is due more to Rousseau, probably, than to any other educationist, partly on account of the su-

preme importance which he attached to natural training.

He himself did not make clear exactly what he meant by "natural" training; but it is very evident as one reads his educational work, "*Émile*," that Rousseau had a consciousness that the methods in vogue in his day were artificial, and hostile to the vital needs of the child. In contrast to adult made methods and points of view, Rousseau commends the methods which are suggested by the child's desires, his spontaneity, his likes and dislikes. Methods worked out from this latter point of view, Rousseau called "natural"; and these he emphasized in every way he knew how to do.

Rousseau
believed
the training
of children
in his day
was artificial

Rousseau was not himself an educated man, and doubtless every one knows that he was not a success in training his own children. He was not a careful student, and his writings show that he was not able to control his own tempestuous feelings, so that he could treat any vital topic dispassionately and impersonally. The "*Émile*," as originally written, was a three-volume novel. Rousseau's purpose in writing it was evidently to present his plans for a natural education. But the book is filled with unrelated observations upon a great variety of topics, though there is a sort of central story woven around the training of *Émile*.

Rousseau's
eccentric
personality

In substance, this child was to be isolated from other children, and he was to be allowed to grow up without repression or even direction from adults, except that he was to have a tutor. Rousseau appeared to think that this would be following nature, probably because the pupil would not have to conform to many of the conventions of society, which were in those days impressed upon the young. From the be-

The training
of "*Émile*."

ginning, children were hedged around with barriers, physical and social. In infancy, they were wrapped in swaddling clothes, and not allowed much freedom to use the limbs or the body. They were early subjected to a rigid system of conventionalities which greatly irritated Rousseau. In school, they were required to learn everything by heart, which Rousseau thought gave them no real understanding of the world about them. The whole system seemed to him artificial, formal, and valueless, if not worse. And his protest against this system is the chief purpose and perhaps the chief merit of his "Émile."

Is the child
born perfect?

He starts out by saying that when the child comes among us he is good; but under the influence of adults he degenerates. But further along he takes a different view, and exalts education, which is to be administered by adults. He realizes that when the child comes into life, he does not possess all the abilities or the moral tendencies essential to adapt himself to the life he must live. Rousseau frequently calls attention to the child's disposition to take advantage of those around him, to command them, if they will obey him, to bully those who are weaker than himself, to appropriate everything he can lay his hands on, to be afraid of things which can do him no harm, and so on *ad libitum*. Rousseau's statement that the child is born perfect, and would continue to be so if it were not for his contact with adults, is typical of many statements he makes which are contradicted in all his practical suggestions.

The child
as heir of the
past

In our own day, one hears occasionally that the child comes to us innocent and well disposed, and if we knew how to treat him, he would never manifest any evil tendencies. But all our studies of child nature have impressed upon us a different conception

of the child. We are realizing now that the child is heir of the past; that he brings with him reminiscences of the life of his ancestors; and that many of these reminiscences are not adapted to modern conditions. Most of his natural tendencies are rather a handicap than a help to him; and much of his training has to do with repressing his instincts, or diverting them, or transforming them, so that they may be suited to present-day conditions of society. Anyone who would treat a child on the supposition that all his native tendencies are good would certainly fail to give him lessons which would be absolutely essential to his proper adjustment to people in mature life. If allowed to run his own course, he would be more or less of a bully. He would not respect the property rights of others, and in many ways he would be out of harmony with the people among whom he must live.

Rousseau's educational suggestions are exactly in line with the principle that the child cannot be permitted to do exactly as he wants to do. While he counsels mothers to respond to the appeals of their children in their real need, still he warns them against indulging children in their weaknesses. Over and over again he says, in effect, that if a child does not learn early to restrain himself and to adapt himself to authority, he will bear the penalties therefor in after life. He says we ought to follow nature's suggestion in this respect. Nature develops the constitutions of children by ordeals of all sorts. Very early she leads the child to feel what pain and trouble mean. Nature does not spare the child, because if he did not learn early what to avoid, his pains would be all the greater therefor in maturity.

Nature
operates on
the plan of
natural
consequences
for misdeeds

Should we prevent children from forming habits of any sort?

One of his suggestions will seem strange to parents who are not familiar with the views of men like Locke. He says that we ought to prevent children from forming definite habits of any sort—habits in respect to sleep, or hours for meals, or anything of the kind. If they form such habits early, Rousseau says, they will become enslaved by them, and will suffer greatly on this account when they are grown. But in our day we are being told by physicians and others that the child's welfare will be promoted in every way if his life is arranged in rhythms, so that certain activities will recur at regular intervals. This appears to be both helpful and economical. It seems to be the law of life that there should be a definite, fixed program of oft-repeated activities at any rate. It appears that Rousseau worked out his theories sometimes in a purely logical way, and that he did not really observe human beings in the effort to determine what method of ordering their daily lives would be most helpful.

Ethical and social training according to the natural method

Rousseau applied his doctrine of education according to nature to learning ethical and social, as well as physical, truths. He points out in a striking way in the "Émile" how the parents and teachers of his time were constantly preventing the child from gaining useful lessons of every kind, but especially social and ethical lessons, by prohibiting him from acting freely and spontaneously, and testing every rule of conduct by actual trial. He says over and over again in different phrases that the moment a child comes into life, the mother often sets about to thwart nature in his training. She prevents him from experiencing the natural consequences of his actions, so that as his life begins to expand he really is an alien in the social world. At the outset,

if he coerces his mother and nurse into gratifying his every wish by whining and flying into a tantrum if he is not constantly waited upon, then in later life he will endeavor to make everyone with whom he comes in contact serve him. He will try to bully his playmates and even his elders. However, in due course he will be placed in situations where people will not endure his bullying. They will get back at him whenever they can. But he will remember the successes of his childhood in domineering over others, and he will persist in his autocratic attitude, until he will make himself and all the people around him miserable.

Rousseau never tires of urging the parent and the teacher not to give in to the child's importuning unless he be in bodily pain. If he seeks by crying to get things he does not actually need, why let him have his cry out. Don't pet him in the effort to appease him. Don't toss and fondle him as parents usually do in order to quiet him. Let him alone, says Rousseau, and in time he will discover that he can gain nothing by crying, except when he is in distress; and it will not take him a great while to conclude that it will be better for him in the end if he restrains his crying. Do not punish him, either, says our author. If you do, he may not understand what his punishment is for. He will probably regard it as arbitrary. He will think you are angry, and that you want to gratify your own will. This, says Rousseau, will tend to make a slave of your child, and rob your training of all value. It will not give him really useful lessons, which will be of service to him in after life. The only thing that will be of use to him will be a realization of the fact that crying will not secure what he wishes from the people around him.

Learning
by actual
experience

I have mentioned this one matter of crying in order to illustrate Rousseau's method of learning by experience. He would apply this same principle to all the training of the child. Whatever the latter does that is right, must bring its natural rewards; while whatever he does that is wrong, must be followed by the inevitable natural consequences. If he tells a lie, he must forfeit the confidence of his parents and teachers; while he must be made to appreciate that when he tells the truth, he will receive their trust and good will. If he is careless with his toys so that they are lost or broken, he must do without them, so that he will learn the lesson of carefulness. If he be heedless and tears his clothing, he must go among his companions in rags, and this may make him more cautious in the future. If he cannot sit near classmates in the school-room without disturbing them, then he must be isolated until he learns the lesson that he should not be a source of annoyance or disturbance to others. And so on at any length.

Rousseau's
method of
dealing with
the child's
fears

He applies this same principle of learning by experience to the overcoming of fear, which practically all children possess; to gaining an idea of property rights; to discriminating between fakirs and honest men, and so on. To illustrate the method in respect to the treatment of fear—Rousseau says that the child ought to be gradually habituated to seeing strange objects, even though they be ugly or even terrifying, in order that he may become accustomed to them and so rid himself of aversion to them. His education must proceed by degrees, viewing the objects at first from a distance, but every day coming a little nearer to them until he discovers that no harm can come to him from them. In this way he should be led to see and to handle frogs, serpents, and other creatures

that usually frighten children and often even adults. Great care must be taken to protect the child from ever being frightened by these or any other objects.

Rousseau's method is well illustrated in his suggestions regarding the best way to get children over the instinctive fear of masques. He says he would begin by showing a child the masque of a face which is pleasing. Then when the child becomes familiar with it so that he will handle it without hesitation, some one should put the masque upon his own face, so that the child may see it. "Then," says Rousseau, "I laugh at the peculiar appearance; everyone around the child laughs, and soon the child himself will be laughing at it." In this way he will overcome his dread of it. Then by degrees, masques of more and more ugly countenances are introduced, until finally the child sees genuinely hideous ones. But he will not now be frightened, because he has by degrees discovered that no harm can come from any sort of masques. It is probable that no principle of training laid down by any of the classic writers on education has been more fruitful than this of Rousseau's on learning by experience.

IV

FROEBEL'S DEVELOPMENTAL METHODS

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(A reference paper)

“N all things there lives and reigns an eternal law. . . . This law has been and is enounced with equal clearness and distinctness in nature (the external), in the spirit (the internal), and in life, which unites the two. This all-controlling law is necessarily based on all-pervading, energetic, living, self-conscious, and hence eternal Unity . . . This Unity is God. All things have come from Divine Unity, from God, and have their origin in the Divine Unity, in God alone. All things live and have their being in and through the Divine Unity, in and through God. The divine effluence that lives in each thing is the essence of each thing.”

‘Self-activity’
and ‘Creative-
ness’ as the
methods of
education

Probably the most characteristic and fruitful consequence of Froebel’s law was its implication as to the proper procedure in education. Froebel sums up his general method under the term ‘self-activity,’ and explains it after his usual mystic fashion. Since the divine effluence is the essence of each thing, and it is the destiny and life work of all things to reveal their essence, man, as an intelligent and rational being, should strive to become fully conscious of the divine effluence in him and reveal it with self-de-



A MODERN MADONNA
From a Photograph from Life.

termination and freedom. "For the living thought," says Froebel, "the eternal divine principle as such demands and requires free *self-activity* on the part of man, the being created for freedom in the image of God." And later, in speaking of 'development,' he adds:

"This should be brought about, not in the way of dead imitation or mere copying, but in the way of living, spontaneous *self-activity*. . . . In every human being, as a member of humanity and as a child of God, there lies and lives humanity as a whole; but in each one it is realized and expressed in a wholly particular, peculiar, personal, and unique manner, and it should be exhibited in each individual human being in this wholly peculiar, unique manner."

By 'self-activity' Froebel, therefore, means more than mere activity. It is not simply activity in response to suggestion or instruction from parents or teachers that he seeks, but activity of the child in carrying out his own impulses and decisions. Individuality must be developed by this activity, and selfhood given its rightful place as the guide to the child's powers when exercised in learning. It is not sufficient that the learner shall do all for himself, but activity must enlist the entire self in all its phases of being. Development is produced through the exercise of function, which consists in the unfolding of a system of inner aims. The soul does not so much possess activity as it is itself activity, and instead of being influenced by, or conforming to, its environment, it tends to make its environment more and more the instrument of self-realization. Training, therefore, should begin with the internal tendencies and volitions of the pupil, but, through

the activities stimulated and the interest guaranteed thereby, the instructional process should aim to direct him toward ideals and achievements of greater importance and permanence than would result from these impulses, if left to themselves. However, this increasing self-realization or individualization is also a process of socialization. It is bound up with participation in institutional life. Each of the various human institutions in which the mentality of the race has manifested itself—the home, the school, the Church, the State and society at large—becomes a medium for the activity of the individual, and at the same time a means of social control. Each institution has its own function, but tends to complement all the others. The individual can be educated only in the company of other human beings. Hence, Froebel held that in education ‘self-activity’ should be used to enable the child to enter into the life about him and to find the connection between himself and the activities of others. As far as he enters into the surrounding life, he is to receive the development needed for the present, and thereby also is to be prepared for the future. Likewise, the power of execution is developed in connection with the increasing knowledge, and there is no gap between theory and practice.

Hence with this development through ‘self-activity’ is connected Froebel’s educational principle of ‘creativeness’ by which new forms and combinations are made and expression is given to new images and ideas. Here also he at first gives his theory a mystic garb and states it in religious language. He declares that “since God created man in his own image, man should create and bring forth like God; this is the

high meaning, the deep significance, the great purpose of work and industry, of productive and creative activity." But when he comes to deal with constructive handwork in the school, he bases his position more upon psychological grounds and says:

"Man is developed and cultured toward the fulfillment of his destiny and mission, and is to be valued, even in boyhood, not only by what he receives and absorbs from without, but much more by what he puts out and unfolds from himself. . . . Plastic material representation in life and through doing, united with thought and speech, is by far more developing and cultivating than the merely verbal representation of ideas."

Even in the "Education of Man," Froebel declares that the systematic use of 'self-activity' and 'creativity' has been neglected in the education of the day. He here advocates development through drawing, domestic activities, gardening, building of dams, houses, and fortresses, paper cutting, paste-board work, modelling and other forms of creation. In the kindergarten, 'self-activity' and 'creativity' found complete application in concrete expression, and Froebel devoted the rest of his life to developing and describing the course of this new educational institution. The training consists of three co-ordinate forms of expression: (1) song, (2) movement and gesture, and (3) construction; and mingled with these and growing out of each is the use of language by the child. But these means, while separate, are intended to co-operate with and interpret one another, and the process is connected as an organic whole. For example, when the story is told or read, it is expressed in song, dramatized in movement and gesture, and illustrated by a construction from blocks,

The
'Play Songs,'
'Gifts'
and 'Occupations,' and
other
features

paper, clay or other material by modelling or drawing. By thus embodying the ideas in objective form, imagination and thought are to be stimulated, the eye and hand trained, the muscles co-ordinated, and the motives and sentiments elevated and strengthened.

The play
songs

The "Mother and Play Songs" were believed by Froebel to contain the best illustration of his system. Of them he says, "I have here laid down the fundamental ideas of my educational principles." This work consists of an organized series of carefully selected songs, games, and pictures, and is intended to make clear and direct the educational instinct of the mother. The songs should enable her to see that the child's education begins at birth, and should awaken her to the responsibility of motherhood. They should likewise exercise the infant's senses, limbs, and muscles and, through the loving union between mother and child, draw both into intelligent and agreeable relations with the common objects of life about them. For the culture of the maternal consciousness, Froebel prefixed to the 'play songs' seven 'mother's songs,' in which he depicts the mother's feelings in viewing her new-born infant, and her hopes and fears as she witnesses the unfolding physical and mental life of the child. The fifty 'play songs' contain each three parts: (1) a motto for the guidance of the mother; (2) a verse with the accompanying music, to sing to the child; and (3) a picture illustrating the verse. Each song is also connected with some simple exercise, which answers to a special physical, mental or moral need of the child. The selection and order of the songs were determined with reference to the child's development, which ranges from the most spontaneous movements up to his ability to represent his perceptions with drawings.

A more complete commentary is afforded by the 'closing thoughts' and the 'explanations' furnished by Froebel at the end of the work.

The most original and striking of the kindergarten materials are the so-called 'gifts' and 'occupations.' The distinction between these two types of media is rather arbitrary, as they are so closely connected in use. The 'occupations' represent activities, while the 'gifts' furnish ideas for these activities. The 'gifts' combine and rearrange certain definite material, but do not change the form, while the 'occupations' reshape, modify and transform their material. The products obtained from the one are transient, but from the other are more permanent. The emphasis in kindergarten practice has come to be transferred from the 'gifts' to the 'occupations,' which have been largely increased in range and number.

The gifts

Froebel also strove to carry out his principle of 'development' in the order and gradation of the 'gifts.' They are so arranged as to lead from the properties or activities of one to those of the next, and, while introducing new impressions, repeat the old. Every new 'gift' is used alternately with the old, and the use of the new makes the play with the old freer and more intelligent. The first 'gift' consists of a box of six woolen balls of different colors. They are to be rolled about in play, and thus develop ideas of color, material, form, motion, direction and muscular sensibility. A sphere, cube and cylinder of hard wood compose the second 'gift.' Here, therefore, are found a known factor in the round sphere and an unknown one in the cube. A comparison is made of the stability of the cube with the movability of the sphere, and the two are har-

monized in the cylinder, which possesses the characteristics and powers of each. The third 'gift' is a large wooden cube divided into eight equal cubes, thus teaching the relations of the parts to the whole and to one another, and making possible original constructions, such as armchairs, benches, thrones, doorways, monuments, or steps. The three following 'gifts' divide the cube in various ways so as to produce solid bodies of different types and sizes, and excite an interest in number, relation, and form. The way is thus prepared for constructive geometry, algebra and trigonometry, and for artistic constructions. In addition to the six regular 'gifts,' additional play with 'tablets,' 'sticks' and 'rings,' sometimes known as 'gifts' seven to nine, was also introduced by Froebel. This material introduces surfaces, lines and points in contrast with the preceding solids, and brings out the relations of area, outline and circumference to volume. It offers innumerable opportunities for the invention of symmetrical patterns and artistic design.

The
occupations

The 'occupations,' which apply to practice what has been assimilated through the 'gifts,' comprise a long list of constructions with paper, sand, clay, wood and other materials. These require greater manual dexterity and include considerable original design. They should not be undertaken until after the 'gifts,' as one must be conscious of ideas before attempting to express them. Corresponding with the 'gifts' that deal with solids may be grouped 'occupations' in clay modelling, cardboard cutting, paper folding and wood carving; and with those of surfaces may be associated mat and paper weaving, stick shaping, sewing, bead threading, paper pricking and drawing. Nature study always formed part of Froebel's cur-

riculum. His principles of unity and the symbolic revelation of God in nature impelled him to introduce the children early to an informal study of the natural sciences. Even in the school of Keilhau there were continual excursions for the study of nature. Likewise, the songs, games, and stories of the kindergarten are filled with reference to natural surroundings, and the pupils are encouraged in their instinctive love for flowers and living creatures through gardening and the care of pet animals. These occupations satisfy their inherent cravings, call forth love, wonder, self-control and self-sacrifice, and furnish material for the development of observation and intelligence. The children gain a permanent interest in natural science, become familiarized with the phenomena of nature, and come to feel a communion and living connection with God.

Since Froebel held to the method of 'self-activity' and 'creativeness' and appealed more to individual interests, his idea of discipline necessarily varied from the authoritative one usually imposed. He held that the principle to be observed was a harmony between spontaneity and self-control. He would have evil overcome by starvation and atrophy and by the nurture and development of the good. He believed that the will could thus be diverted without paralyzing it, and that, if bad traits were not entirely removed, their proportion would at least be reduced. With him punishment was not abolished, but the necessity of it practically disappeared.

The schooling beyond the kindergarten stage was never worked out by Froebel. He felt that the continuity and development in the life of the individual should be unbroken, and in the "Education of Man" he promises at some future time to consider the stages

Froebel's
idea of
discipline

of education beyond boyhood, with which he closes there. But after the kindergarten was once formulated, he became completely absorbed in the development of early childhood, and could not be induced for any length of time to take an interest in the later stages of education and the ordinary school problems. In consequence, except for a small effort of Froebel toward the close of his life to map out a course for 'transition classes,' no one has ever seriously undertaken to bridge the gap between the kindergarten activities connected with physical development and sense impressions, and the elementary school, which concerns itself more with judgment, reasoning and abstractions.

The value
of Froebel's
principles

It is a most lamentable interpretation that takes account only of the shortcomings of Froebel. He was the truest successor of Pestalozzi. Like the Swiss reformer, he desired a natural development of man, but he had a clearer and more definite comprehension of what this consisted in, and he greatly enlarged the means of accomplishing a training in keeping with it. Pestalozzi, through his sympathy for humanity and the inspiration of the moment, was interested primarily in the practice aspect of educational reform, and developed his theories afterward. Froebel, on the other hand, sought to formulate general principles from his observation, make his educational method grow out of their application, and constantly test his generalizations by practical experience. While the one would teach the pupil to secure accurate knowledge through observation and to imitate, the other would enable him to train his senses and emotions to proper activity as a preparation for later knowledge and activity of a more original sort.

Froebel has thus not only supplemented Pestalozzi, but is recognized as one of the first reformers to apply the advanced philosophy and scientific ideas of the nineteenth century to education. While Froebel never developed his system much beyond the earliest period of life, his principles are suggestive of the most important tendencies in all stages of education today. Through his ideas of 'continuity' and 'development' one may more thoroughly understand the nature of the child and realize the central feature in all life relations. From these principles may be derived the real purpose of education and the means and method for accomplishing it. Thus may be secured a training adapted to every period of life and stage of development, furnishing the highest philosophy and the most ennobling ethical thought. Now that the meaning of his 'self-activity' and 'creativity' is coming to be comprehended, they are recognized as most essential laws in the educational process, and are to be valued as the universal criterion of effective teaching. In harmony with Froebel, the school is coming to be conceived as an institution in which to discover and work out individuality by means of initiative and execution; and spontaneous activities, like play, constructive work and nature study, have more and more become the means to this end. The importance of having all instruction lead to activity as directly as possible is now appreciated, and education has been given a social, moral and practical meaning throughout the learning process. Thus the implications of Froebel's system are apparent in all modern educational theory and practice.

V

AN INTERPRETATION OF MARIA MONTES- SORI AND HER METHOD

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THOUGHTFUL, sympathetic Italian woman, with penetrating insight, masterful mind and dominating will, has evolved a method for teaching little children which has attracted the attention of educators on two continents. Some of the ideals and practices of this physician-teacher, Maria Montessori, are true enough and broad enough to flourish wherever child life is found,—in home or school, among rich or poor, on American soil or in the land where the method is native.

The home's
interest in
the method

With the child's first breath, his education begins; and the mother, his first teacher, should have as her equipment, not only the nurturing instinct, but the scientific insight which would make her the wisest of guides for her child. School training can never take the place of home training during these first few formative years, no matter how willing the mother may be to abdicate in favor of the teacher. Tendencies are developed, habits are formed, notions are established, permanent good is accomplished or harm is done, long before the child steps foot upon the threshold of the school. Hence the Montessori method, suggestive of much that is fundamental in

*Miss Ward has in preparation a book entitled, "Ten Talks on the Montessori Method," of which this paper will form a part.

child development, should interest all mothers of young children, and all will be well repaid for a thorough study of Dr. Montessori's book and thoughtful experiments with her didactic materials in the home.

My interest in the Montessori Method took me to Italy where I made an investigation of the system at first hand. And after going daily into the schools for some weeks, I came back to America with the conviction that there has not been a greater contribution to educational reform since the days of Pestalozzi and Froebel than this made by Dr. Maria Montessori in her Houses of Childhood, in Rome. One sees in a Montessori school, airy rooms, open courts and ample spaces for gardens and games. All furnishings show consideration for the children's convenience and comfort, even the chairs and tables being light and movable. The didactic materials peculiar to this system are everywhere in evidence, provoking interest and investigation. Instead of arranging the children in even rows and classes and requiring that, at stated times, they shall engage in prescribed occupations, they are permitted to work singly at the thing they wish to do, or arrange themselves into natural groups, according to mutual taste and present interest. Often a dozen activities are going on at once.

Many things taught in the primary school are learned as if by magic and without the aid of books. Sand-paper letters, and words lightly traced with the finger tips simplify first steps in reading, touch aiding sight in this mental process. The long stair, broad stair and tower are attractive blocks to play with and make the multiplication table a happy discovery.

**The
Montessori
school-
rooms**

There is no confusion, no disorder, in this school, neither is there the unnatural quiet which is the fetich of the over-orderly teacher. The busy hum of the various activities does not disturb these absorbed little workers. One might fancy this school anti-social until it is time for the games, the serving of the luncheon or some other exercises which require community effort. Then it is that these children organize into a large and flourishing family, each one taking part with an intelligent co-operation which might put their elders to shame. While two pairs of hands arrange the cloth, others bring silver and dishes, and in a twinkling the table is arranged for luncheon, the older children reading from the bulletins the names of those assigned to special duties.

The
directress

One of the striking features of the Montessori school is the self-effacement of the teacher, or "directress," as Dr. Montessori prefers to call her. As we recall our first school days, do we not think of the teacher as the central figure and her word the children's law? This directress, instead of being the most conspicuous and the only active agency in the school, keeps herself well in the background, the children moving about with freedom and initiative. She has no stated place, no desk, no rostrum from which to reign. One's first feeling is that there is no teacher present, so self-controlled and independent do the children seem. Like Froebel's ideal kindergarten, she must be passive, following, not categorical and prescriptive.

The child's
individuality

Dr. Montessori holds that the child's individuality is a most sacred gift and must be allowed to develop in an atmosphere of freedom, without the invasion of other personalities. She resents the tendency of grown-ups to dominate and weaken children's wills,

making them dependent copyists. I once visited a board school in London where there was that painful quiet of suppressed, inactive children. Only one boy out of sixty moved in his place and when this one swung his feet out into the aisle to make the spine-curving seat less uncomfortable, he was sharply reprimanded and the teacher said by way of apology, "I have only had this boy two days."

Dr. Montessori says, "We do not consider an individual disciplined when he has been rendered as artificially silent as a mute and as immovable as a paralytic. He is an individual annihilated not disciplined. We call an individual disciplined when he is master of himself." The Montessori directress must follow the lead of the naturalist and be an observer of phenomena, interfering as little as is consistent. Dr. Montessori's own illustration of the function of the teacher makes this point clear. She reminds us that the useful guide who shows to a tourist a thing of artistic beauty simply says enough to enable the sightseer to understand and appreciate, then withdraws himself, for the guide is not the object of interest. So the teacher must give necessary information and direction, then leave the child to work things out for himself. The garrulous teacher is an abomination to Dr. Montessori. She claims that a child smothered with words comprehends little that is said to him.

The belief that the child hungers for reality and for real purposeful activity causes Dr. Montessori to put into his hands the tools for gardening and for many of the household processes. This teaches habits of thrift, industry and service, and gives self-mastery and bodily poise. It is delightful to watch the absorbed interest with which these little workers

Satisfying
the child's
hunger for
reality

sweep and fold their small rugs, the housewifely precision with which they put away their brooms, the joy with which they enter into real work with real tools and real results. Dr. Montessori does not, however, lose sight of the child's love of play or neglect the æsthetic side of his nature.

The story of the development of this method reads almost like a fairy tale of our childhood. How a mind highly trained for one purpose was seized by quite another idea and drawn into quite another field of activity, and how the way was made plain for this unexpected pioneering by a combination of circumstances so fortuitous as to seem almost to belong to a romantic age rather than to our scientific century.

**Dr.
Montessori's
preparation**

It was the dream of Maria Montessori's life to become a physician and with energy and high spirit she turned her unusually gifted personality in that direction. It was no light thing in Italy during her girlhood for a young woman to secure the training she sought. Social prejudice, intellectual bigotry and professional jealousies barred her way, but with characteristic persistence she reached her goal and was the first woman to receive the degree of Doctor of Medicine at the University of Rome. Her work as an educator is an outgrowth of her medical study—an afterthought. Hence it is easy to understand why she attacks the whole child problem from the physiological standpoint. Few women have brought to any profession such a broad and varied experience, such thorough and scientific training.

Her first step in the direction of the educational field was when, as an assistant doctor at the Psychiatric Clinic of the University of Rome, she frequently visited the slums and insane hospitals for suitable

subjects. A keen interest in children's diseases, especially those of defectives, took possession of this noble-hearted woman, as did also the social problems of the poor. One who has not visited the poverty-stricken sections of Rome has little conception of conditions there. Want and depravity produce many abnormal children. Some are functionally defective, others unawakened and backward. Dr. Montessori attacked this situation with much force, asserting that idiocy was not alone a problem for the physician but for the teacher as well; that pedagogy more than medicine could improve conditions.

She began her study of Itard and Seguin with great vigor, translating into Italian line by line the works of these famous French specialists, and visiting Paris and London for purposes of research. She lectured and wrote extensively, urging careful scientific corrective measures for this neglected class. The outgrowth of her agitation was the establishing of the State Orthophrenic School where she not only trained teachers in special methods of dealing with the feeble minded, but taught the children herself, often working from eight in the morning until seven at night, almost without intermission. "This," says Dr. Montessori, "is my true degree in pedagogy."

Through years of experience and untiring devotion to this work she evolved a plan of teaching by which abnormal children were brought up to grade, passing the usual tests of normal children of the same age. To prove the efficiency of her method she asked to have these children admitted to the municipal schools. The permission was reluctantly granted. When the teachers saw the advancement of these defectives they said, "It is a miracle." Dr. Montessori replied: "Such a seeming miracle would not be pos-

sible if you gave to the children under your charge as fair a chance by the use of scientific methods. They, without handicap, would make a proportionately great advance and thus vastly outstrip their feeble brothers and sisters."

Letting
children do
for themselves

Space will permit me to emphasize but one of a few known but neglected principles whose power in governing child life, Dr. Montessori has demonstrated to her own satisfaction, and that of thousands of visitors; but freedom really underlies all the others.

Every striking feature of Dr. Montessori's school may be traced to a reverence for the child's personality which causes her to demand for it opportunity for self-realization through free self-activity. Froebel, with his remarkable vision, also demanded this, exclaiming, "We must launch the child from birth into the free and all-sided use of his powers!"

Do we not all feel the temptation to do for the children within our care the things they might do for themselves, thus ignoring the great law of growth which is that strength comes only through struggle, and that the overcoming of obstacles and the mastering of difficulties gives more real joy than achievement when it is reached? We all know the familiar clamor, "Let me do it myself," "I can do it alone," yet how often we take work out of children's hands and words out of children's mouths! How inclined we are to suppress, subdue, control, insisting that children think our thoughts and do things our way, thus developing limp imitators instead of encouraging personal power and initiative. Montessori says in that strong plea for liberty found in the fifth chapter of her book, "We cannot know the consequences of suffocating a spontaneous action at the time when

the child is just beginning to be active. Perhaps we suffocate life itself. Humanity shows itself in all its splendor at this tender age as the sun shows itself at the dawn, and the flower in the first unfolding of its petals, and we must respect religiously, reverently, these first indications of individuality."

Two recent events have made a general use of the Montessori ideas possible in the American home: the appearance of an English translation of Dr. Montessori's educational treatise, "The Montessori Method," published by Stokes & Co. of New York; and the organization of an American corporation in New York known as The House of Childhood, which manufactures the didactic material. In addition to Dr. Montessori's own book, the following discussions of the method will be of interest: "The Montessori System," by Dr. Theodate Smith; "Dr. Maria Montessori," by Anne E. George; "The Montessori Mother," by Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

OBSERVATIONS OF MUSCULAR MOVEMENT

VI

ONE MOTHER'S RECORD FROM DAY TO DAY OF HER BABY'S MUSCULAR CONTROL

JEANNETTE HALL

Author of "Life's Story"
(A reference paper)

10th Day:—Early in his second week the child began to suck his thumb, which he obtained quite accidentally by throwing the arms aimlessly about.

(a) Move-
ments inci-
dent to
sucking the
thumb

52nd Day:—In the eighth week it was noted that the thumb was used almost exclusively when he was hungry or sleepy. It was still carried to his mouth in an uncertain way, but with evident purpose. Sucking the thumb came to be the sign of hunger and an indispensable aid in going to sleep.

In the sixteenth week, when held close to the breast, he often slipped his thumb into his mouth under the impression that he had the breast, but became impatient when he found that it yielded nothing.

118th Day:—In the seventeenth week, the breast was shown to him, while he still held his thumb in his mouth, and then for the first time he seemed to realize that the two were separate and that he must release the thumb before obtaining the breast. Up to this time, the thumb had been removed for him, but on this occasion no assistance was given until he himself had made an effort to remove it, and had failed. He looked at the breast, then worked at the thumb, then cried, but could not take it from his mouth. He was thereupon assisted and given the breast. Each time he nursed he was required to make an effort to

remove the thumb, and was afterward given such help as was necessary.

119th Day:—Late the next day, after a long trial and some crying, he succeeded in his efforts, whereupon he made a little sound of satisfaction and seized the breast. Six days later, he was able to remove the thumb at will, and with ease.

(b) Grasping

57th Day:—To ascertain the time of his first conscious effort to grasp, objects were from day to day placed in his hand, but he seemed quite unconscious of their presence until one day when his closed hand was opened and a leather pen case laid within, then for the first time, he seemed to know that he held something, and his fingers tightened upon it.

70th Day:—The hand was clinched with the thumb inside until the seventieth day, and outside from that time.

73d Day:—His first, though ineffectual effort to reach an object, was made three days later. Objects were carried to the mouth in the twelfth week. The tendency to test everything by the sense of taste increased until the twelfth month, after which it declined and was entirely discontinued in the fifteenth month.

During the first few months, objects were carried to the mouth in a peculiar way; the right hand being used for carrying the object, while the left, by making the corresponding motion, was used to balance and direct the right hand. Even when putting the thumb in his mouth, he used the left hand in this way, and finally held the left hand under the right one, while sucking the right thumb. If the left hand was confined so that he could not use it in this way, it was noticeably harder for him to put the right hand to his mouth, while it always annoyed him, causing him to cry.

100th Day:—When, in the thirteenth week, a handkerchief was thrown over his face, for a game of peek-a-boo, he protested, but after the game had been repeated for two days he no longer objected,—he even seemed to like it, and soon laughed heartily when the handkerchief was removed. If the handkerchief was allowed to cover his face for a few seconds, it gave him a sense of discomfort which caused him to push his head up to free himself. Having once in this way removed the discomfort and reaped the reward of seeing his mother's face, he enjoyed the game still more, and in his excitement both arms were thrown rapidly about. Catching his fingers in the handkerchief, he partially removed it. Having discovered this new method, he discontinued the head movements and accomplished the removal of the handkerchief by simultaneous, symmetrical, full arm motions. (See c, General Arm Movements.)

103d Day:—Three days later he amused himself for three-quarters of an hour by pulling his long dress up over his face and off again, laughing and crowing with pleasure, although he was quite alone in the room.

87th Day:—In the thirteenth week, while lying in his bed, he fastened his hand in the curtains that hung about his head and by jerking and pulling them found entertainment for ten minutes.

105th Day:—In the sixteenth week, he was left lying in his carriage, the curtains of which were closely drawn. Hearing voices near, he parted the curtains so that he could see. Whether the sound of voices had induced an active crossing of the arms, during which he had accidentally caught his fingers in the curtains, or whether he had purposely parted them, is not known; that he felt satisfaction in the result was evident.

112th Day:—That it was done designedly seems probable from the fact that on the 112th day he played with the curtains, grasping them whenever he so desired.

123d Day:—He also grasped and firmly held the framework of his carriage top, to steady him as he rode.

109th Day:—When a vase containing a single yellow flower was placed on the table before him, he became much excited, making motions with both hands toward the flower. The motions were illy directed to be sure, but he nevertheless succeeded in obtaining a hold upon the vase with the right hand and in maintaining it until he had worked the hand up and procured the flower. Desiring to ascertain how much of purpose there was in his effort, the experiment was tried on two successive days, both times with the same result as at first.

126th Day:—He displayed great excitement over a bowl of buttercups which stood on the table. When near enough, he made a sudden dash toward them and seized a handful, which he held tightly clasped in his hand. On the same day, a pod of peas was laid on the back of his hand. He at once turned his hand over, and grasped the pod, using however, the thumb and first two fingers only, while the third and little finger lay passive under the pod.

131st Day:—Five days later, he used all four fingers and thumb in clasping a rubber whistle which was put into his hand.

132d Day:—On the following day he held out his hand for the whistle when it was shaken before him, and with a little assistance grasped it.

135th Day:—In three days he learned to take it from our hands without help, and to put the small

end into his mouth. But not being able to regulate the distance to which it was inserted, he frequently pushed it too far in, causing him to gag and cry.

137th Day:—It required the experience of two days to properly adjust it.

139th Day:—He shook the rattle up and down with a whole arm movement, looking intently at it before taking it again, and again after having obtained it.

147th Day:—The colored kindergarten balls had been suspended from the canopy of his bed since the sixth week, but it was not until the twenty-third week that he made a noticeable attempt to obtain them.

156th Day:—The first attempt was ineffectual, but one made a week later was successful. His endeavor to grasp the suspended balls set them to swinging, but he finally caught the cord by which they were suspended, and then slipping his hand down, obtained one of the balls. By using his thumb and fingers in opposition, he could at this time take hold of an article, such as a plate, and draw it to him.

In recording the facts incident to sections a and b, it has been necessary to encroach somewhat upon this section. Just where this encroachment occurred is too apparent to need a repetition here. The growth of the power of general arm movements and of the co-ordination of the activity of the different groups of arm muscles, may be reviewed by reference to the record of the following days:—10th, 52nd, 100th, 103d, 105th, 125th and 137th.

222d Day:—Having seen a little girl wave her hand, “Bye-bye,” upon taking leave of him, he was assisted to make a similar motion; after this time he was frequently asked to say “Bye-bye,” and was

(c) General
arm
movements

always assisted in the motion until about two weeks later, when he waved his hand without assistance or suggestion in response to his aunt's waving hand, and to our astonishment, he accompanied the gesture with the word, "Bye-bye," uttered with distinctness. (See Language.)

245th Day:—He followed the time-honored custom of carrying the toe to the mouth with both hands, in the thirty-sixth week. In the thirty-eighth week, finding himself within reaching distance of his baby carriage, he stretched his body and right arm, until he had grasped its handle, which he then drew near enough to enable him to take hold with both hands. Having obtained a firm hold, he braced himself against my lap, until he stood, and then swaying back and forth, he alternately pushed and pulled the carriage.

260th Day:—During this same week, he sat upon the floor, pulling a long hair through his fingers, taking it first in one hand, and then in the other, his face wearing, meanwhile, an expression of absorbed interest. The same day, he amused himself by taking a tiny crumb of bread in his fingers, evidently intending to carry it to his mouth, but, opening his fingers to examine it, he unconsciously dropped it, and seemed much mystified at its disappearance.

264th Day:—A hanging lamp which had given him great pleasure was always pointed to, as soon as he entered the room, but the "pointing" was really a motion of the extended hand and arm until the thirty-ninth week, when he pointed with the index finger of the right hand.

287th Day:—His strength and his ability to co-ordinate were shown in an incident of the forty-first week. He was lifted up to look through the window,

when his attention was attracted by the upper part of the lower window sash, which the child could scarcely reach with the finger tips of his right hand. He succeeded in getting a firm hold, and in pulling himself high enough to obtain a hold with the left hand also. In this way he raised himself so that he could look over the sash. After a moment, forgetting that it was his own effort that held him up, he loosened his hold and dropped back to his former level. He repeated the previous efforts until he had regained his position, when, desiring to grasp the window shade, he again released his hold, and once more dropped back. A third time he raised himself, his strength was slightly reinforced—this time he retained his hold with one hand, while he pulled at the shade with the other. When he became tired, he changed hands, not loosening his hold with one hand until he had firmly grasped the sash with the other.

317th Day:—In learning to “pat-a-cake,” he was assisted in making the motions. He then became able to bring the hands together without assistance, but it was several weeks before he could alternately put them together and take them apart. He practiced this when playing alone, and when he had succeeded, he was asked to pat-a-cake and responded with evident pleasure.

339th Day:—It was three weeks later when he had acquired the necessary skill to place the right index finger in the palm of the left hand to “pick it.”

390th Day:—After watching two children play ball, he was allowed to join the game. The ball was rolled to him, he picked it up, then leaning far forward, placed it upon the floor, but could not push

it away. His hand was repeatedly given an impulse which sent the ball forward, but even then, he was unable to roll it alone. The ball was thrown to him, and he tried to return it, but after raising his arm and reaching the hand forward, he could not propel the ball. Again he was assisted in making the requisite motion, and when the ball left his hand, he screamed with delight. After playing fifteen or twenty minutes, he raised the arm as if to throw the ball, then opened the hand and let it drop out, but was unable to give it a forward impulse. The game was played daily, and each time at the beginning of the play, he experienced the old difficulty, but each day he succeeded after fewer trials than were necessary on the previous occasion, and finally learned to throw the ball in an awkward way.

396th Day:—By the fifty-eighth week he had become able to throw it in the general direction of his effort.

414th Day:—By the sixtieth week, he threw it with ease and with considerable accuracy.

447th Day:—In the seventieth week, he found a stone on the pavement and amused himself during his walk by throwing it ahead of him and then running and picking it up, to throw again.

455th Day:—In his attempts to throw a kiss, it was some time before he was able to properly co-ordinate the motion. From the first, he could put the hand, palm inward, upon his lips; later he learned to imprint the kiss upon it, but it was two weeks before he learned to take the hand away from his mouth, and still later before he was able to throw the kiss. Even as late as the four hundred and eightieth day, he could not direct the kiss well.

458th Day:—He had worked very persistently to

put the cylindrical spring attachment of his spinning top in place. This required very exact adjustment, as the hole in the cylinder must not only be placed over the axis of the top, but the axis of the cylinder must be brought into coincidence with the axis of the top before it could slip into place. At first he was totally unable to adjust it, a few days later he succeeded after repeated trials, and at the end of three additional days he adjusted it at the first attempt. During this week he took off and put on again the cover of a small tin box, after a few minutes' trial.

478th Day:—He was given a little music box from which the handle had become detached, and was told to put it on. This he did at once, the muscular actions being exactly that required for the adjustment of the spring attachment of the spinning top. (See above.) When he had placed the handle in its proper position, his father turned it, producing a tune. He took the box and attempted to turn the handle, but succeeded only in pulling it off. Each morning his father gave him the music box and let him adjust the handle and try to turn it. The first improvement was in ability to keep the handle moving in a horizontal plane, the next, in moving it continuously in one direction, and the last, in moving it in the right direction.

492nd Day:—Two weeks after the first effort, he adjusted the handle, moved it in a horizontal plane continuously in the direction taken by the hands of a clock, and maintained this motion until he had produced the desired music. Two days later, he accidentally took the box in the right hand, and put the handle on with the left hand. He adjusted it easily, and made the turning motions accurately, but

in an opposite direction, consequently making no music. From that time his occasional attempts to play the music box with the left hand resulted, as did this first one, in a reversed rotation.

(d) Leg
movements

65th Day:—Until the tenth week, all exercise with feet and legs seemed instinctive or reflex, but at this time, while lying in his bed on his back, kicking, he seemed to realize that he was making the motions. He kicked vigorously at this time, accompanying it with arm motions which coincided in time and motion with the leg movements. It gave him evident pleasure, and the enjoyment seemed to be in the discovery of the power, rather than the exercise itself. He daily amused himself with this exercise, and one day, after a season of vigorous kicking, he braced himself against a roll of bed clothing at the foot of the bed, and raised himself until he had two points of contact with the bed—foot and shoulders—then he dropped back, and repeated the process many times. This event marked the beginning of an activity which continued to increase until he seemed never still while awake. Three hours of activity were followed by three hours of almost motionless sleep during the day, and during the night he slept from six to eight consecutive hours.

(e) Sitting

120th Day:—In the eighteenth week, his father taught him to grasp with each hand the index finger of each of his father's hands, and, by retaining his grasp, to pull himself to a sitting posture. He seemed to comprehend what was required of him, grasped tightly and pulled until he was in a half sitting posture, then released the fingers and fell back. This exercise was renewed each day, and he was always allowed to fall back when he loosened his hold.

150th Day:—By the twenty-second week, he learned to take the fingers when proffered, to raise

himself by pulling upon them, and to maintain his position for one or two minutes by retention of his hold upon his supports.

121st Day:—After the first experience in sitting, gained by the above experiment, he objected to being laid flat down in the carriage during his ride, and discontinued his objections as soon as he was placed in a half sitting position.

124th Day:—If placed in a horizontal position, he would raise himself to a sitting posture by grasping the pillow on each side of him.

169th Day:—While riding in the twenty-fifth week, he raised himself from a horizontal to an erect position, so that he could see passing objects, but was laid down in spite of his protest. In a very few minutes he once more sat erect. He was then made comfortable with pillows and was allowed to ride erect.

211th Day:—It was as late as the thirty-first week that he first sat up quite independently, but from this time he always sat alone, losing his balance only when he reached too far in his efforts to attain some desired object. He could raise himself from a horizontal to a sitting posture, simply by the strength of his abdominal muscles.

212th Day:—After falling, he always righted himself, either in this way or by the aid of his arms.

56th Day:—The child was first seen to turn from the right side to the back in the ninth week, but was not seen to turn from one side to the other until the thirtieth week.

209th Day:—He turned from the right to the left side, upon which he preferred to lie.

221st Day:—In the thirty-second week, he turned from his back to his stomach while lying upon the floor. The fact that he was always put to sleep

(f) Rolling

on his side, and that while awake and lying upon his back, he had no motive for turning, as the points of interest were usually directly before him, may have influenced the time of turning from the back.

(g) Hitching

284th Day:—He sometimes hitched along while sitting, once moving as far as seven feet by this method, but as he seemed unable to control the direction of the locomotion, he seldom resorted to it.

(h) Creeping

235th Day:—He first got upon his knees while in the bath tub, by taking hold of the sides of the tub, and later he knelt in his carriage; but these are the only instances of the assumption of this position until he was learning to walk.

253d Day:—Frequently he changed his position from a sitting to a horizontal one, lying flat on his stomach and kicking. The efforts made with arms and feet to obtain desired objects resulted in a backward motion which took him away from the object of his desire.

(i) Standing
and walking

135th Day:—He showed no early desire to bear his weight upon his feet; perhaps because he was not encouraged to stand. In the twenty-third week, he braced himself in a standing position, with his feet in my lap. He was afterwards allowed to bear a part of his weight upon his feet, when he so desired. In the thirty-eighth week, while lying upon the floor on his back, he grasped my extended finger, and, keeping his body rigid, pulled himself to his feet, where he maintained his position for a minute, then, as he weakened, he was laid back on the floor, to rise again, this time standing two minutes.

347th Day:—In the forty-eighth week, he was able to rise with the help of a chair, and after gaining his feet to stand for five minutes at a time, holding the chair with one hand, while he played with the other.

358th Day:—In the fiftieth week, he stood at the window for half an hour, using one hand and then the other for support. Having now become strong enough, he was given a lesson in walking. His father supported the most of his weight while the child's feet were moved forward in unison with his father's; the motion was easy for him, and in his daily walk, he soon learned to make the motions very accurately and to carry his own weight.

364th Day:—While standing by a chair, he accidentally pushed it forward and followed it to keep his support. Then finding he could walk in this way, he pushed it across the room and after the chair was turned for him, walked back again with it. On the same day, he stood alone for half a minute, taking great pride in the feat.

391st Day:—He stood without any support quite easily for several minutes, until he saw that he was observed, when he immediately fell.

405th Day:—When put in the middle of the room, quite alone, he held up his arms, and looking very proud, stood for two minutes.

415th Day:—In the sixtieth week, he could walk quite steadily when supported by one hand.

428th Day:—He made no effort to walk alone until a little girl who was playing with him retreated from him with his favorite toy. He promptly followed the plaything, thus taking the first unaided step. This was done repeatedly, until he had taken four consecutive steps. Each succeeding day he took a few steps, and a week after the first trial he took ten independent steps.

435th Day:—A few days later, he walked nearly the length of the room to obtain a toy. Before starting he seemed to measure the distance, to steady him-

self for an effort, and then he walked unfalteringly toward the toy, sitting down to pick it up.

453d Day:—When walking, if he felt unsteady, he stopped, balanced himself, and proceeded. Although able to walk alone, he usually walked with the aid of a supporting hand or a convenient piece of furniture, until this day, when he suddenly became independent. He chose an objective point, and ignoring all intermediate objects walked straight to his goal. If he fell, he crept to the nearest object by which he could rise, and having regained his feet continued his course.

455th Day:—Two days after this change, he made an independent turn, going half across the room and back again. At this stage of his development he walked quite fast, and maintained his equilibrium by the use of his outstretched arms.

468th Day:—In the sixty-sixth week, he could walk steadily and was allowed to walk on the pavement, at first by pushing the baby carriage before him; but soon outgrowing this method, he walked along, having become able to accommodate himself to the unevenness of the stones.

480th Day:—In the latter part of the seventieth week, he rose from the middle of the pavement without support, and the same day he bent over, picked up a stick from the ground, and regained his position without contact with any support.—[*This is but a small part of Mrs. Hall's record, the whole of which may appear in book form.*—ED.]

VII

HOW THE CHILD GAINS MUSCLE CONTROL

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FEW persons who have asked a child of two years, sitting on the floor, to bring a book from a table on the other side of the room, and observed him do it with perfect grace and accuracy of movement, have reflected upon the wonderful accomplishment he has gained in two years. If the whole process were governed by consciousness, the mind of the most intelligent man, even if he were an expert train dispatcher, would be baffled in the attempt to direct the nervous impulses in the right channels. Most persons would say that the young child discovers by chance what ones of the many non-voluntary movements he makes are useful and how to repeat them and also that he tries to imitate the movements of others and by chance succeeds after a few trials. No doubt there is truth in this answer and in a superficial view no other is required. It can be easily shown by mathematics, however, that the first successful production of a new motion cannot be due entirely to chance.

A child only a few days old is often quite active in the sense that he moves many muscles in twisting, turning and crying, but most of these movements accomplish nothing. They do not get him anywhere or get anything to him. Most of them are indefinite

The wonder
of voluntary
movements

The baby's
first
movements

and variable, not related closely to each other or much affected by outside things. The crying movements are, however, sufficiently definite to make a certain kind of sound. The lips, tongue and muscles of breathing also work together so that milk is obtained. These are the most definite and best correlated movements that the child makes soon after birth. The simpler movements of clasping with the fingers any object that touches them and the closing of the eyelids when they or the skin near them are touched are two of the most definite reflex movements that are made soon after birth. Nearly all the other movements are of an indefinite, aimless sort.

**Definite
movements
not due to
chance alone**

The definite movements named above must be the result of inherited connections between parts, but the indefinite, variable, uncorrelated, may seem to an observer to be governed wholly by chance. In little more than a year, all this has changed. Head, eyes, body, hands and feet are moved so as to accomplish definite purposes and one movement is correlated with another. The body and head are held erect while the legs move them to the desired object, the eyes are kept directed toward it and the arm is extended and the hand closed at just the right time.

How has this change taken place? The child knows nothing of the many nerves and muscles concerned and the intricate course taken by the numerous nervous impulses that are passing from skin and eye to spinal cord and brain and back to the right muscles so that each will be moved the right amount at just the right time.

However active the child may be, chance alone could not in the short space of a year or two, bring about the contracting of just the right muscles at

the right time. There is no question that chance movements do sometimes result in a definite movement that brings favorable results, and that according to a general principle of habit, such a movement is then more likely to occur again under the same circumstances, than any other. An infant drinking from a bottle threw up his hands and feet when the milk ceased to flow. The leg happened to tip the bottle so the milk could be obtained. This soon resulted in the habit of raising his bottle up with his leg. It was not chance that made the infant raise his legs instead of moving them sideways, but inherited tendency to contract certain muscle groups when irritated. It was chance that the leg tipped the bottle in the right way and habit that for a time fixed that mode of holding it. This is typical of the way in which some movements are learned.

A study of the way in which the indefinite, spontaneous movements of a child are transformed into definite, purposeful and voluntary movements is easily made and interesting both to the trained and the untrained observer.

The eyes at first move part of the time in a definite way as if objects were being observed, while at other times one moves one way and the other in an opposite direction. After a few months they always move together and follow accurately a moving object. This is not the result of chance but of an inherited relation between visual sensations and the muscles concerned in moving the eyes. If you put your face close to that of a young baby and when his eyes are directed toward it, move it slowly to one side then back, the eyes of the babe will sometimes turn as your face moves almost as if being drawn by strings. Experience develops this native

The eye
movement

tendency until much smaller and more rapidly moving objects are followed. A little later an object at one side that moves draws the eyes toward it. At a still later date the eyes are turned toward the source of a sound that is made on one side or the other and the head moves with the eyes.

How grasping
is developed

Only after the child can hold his body erect and turn his head and eyes toward objects is it possible for him to grasp them, for if he fell over or looked in another direction he could not touch them. Chance plays a part in learning to grasp objects, but native tendencies are also prominent, as may easily be seen. When a child looks at a bright red ball he makes many vigorous movements of hands, and perhaps feet also, but in general his body and limbs go toward rather than away from the object at which he looks. Often he reaches too high or too low or to one side before the object is touched, but if the gaze is intense sometimes the hands move directly toward the object. Experiment also shows that rarely does a child really try to grasp an object that is much beyond his reach, although he may stretch out his arms longingly toward the moon or other distant object. In the case of the chick, this inherited tendency and connection of parts is so complete that it can usually peck successfully small particles of food the first time it tries. In no case are more than a few hours' or days' practice necessary before pecking is as accurate as in the adult hen. In the case of the child, however, months of practice are necessary before an object seen may be touched with as much accuracy as by an adult. When a child touches an object the closing of the fingers around it is an inherited reflex and the drawing of the object toward his sensitive lips is instinctive. Chance, success and

practice perfect this co-ordinated movement of grasping, but the elements of the movement and the tendency to combine them are inherited.

The instinctive tendency to move toward attractive objects beyond his reach leads the child to crawl, creep, roll, hitch along, go on hands and feet like a dog, or walk in getting where he wants to go. He is likely to try several of these modes of locomotion before he uses walking exclusively. Walking becomes the preferred mode only when it is most easily or quickly effective. The chicken, the pig, and the colt can walk without practice, but it usually seems as if the child must *learn* to walk. The elements of the complex act are, however, inherited, and sometimes may become associated and co-ordinated without practice in walking. This is well illustrated by the following account of how the daughter of Superintendent Hall, of North Adams, Mass., learned to walk.

“Katherine was a normal child in other respects, bright, active, and healthy, yet unable to walk a step when she was seventeen months old. Of course we were anxious, fearing that the cause of this inefficiency might be physical, especially as she persisted in crawling and absolutely refused to help herself under the encouragement of any assistance.

“At last we referred the matter to a physician, who said, ‘It is a peculiar case, and I can hardly tell whether the difficulty is physical or mental. If there is no improvement in a short time, call me again.’ Shortly afterwards I came home at noon one day, and placing my cuffs on a table in the sitting room, threw myself on a lounge to rest. Katherine happened to notice the cuffs where she sat on the floor, and crawling across the room, pulled herself up by

Possibilities
of inherited
tendencies in
learning to
walk

the leg of the table, and reaching out with one hand, while she held onto the table with the other, took a cuff off from the table and slipped it over her wrist. Of course to do this she had to stand alone. I noticed it at once and was surprised when she reached out her other hand for the other cuff and slipped that on, and then stood looking in a very interested way at the cuffs on both wrists. Then, to our great surprise, she turned towards me with a very pleased expression on her face and walked as confidently and easily as any child could. Not only this, but she immediately ran across the room through another room and around through the hallway, not simply walking, but running as rapidly as a child four or five years of age would. What surprised me most was that she did not seem to be wearied by her effort at all.

“We allowed her to keep the cuffs on for ten minutes or more and she was on her feet all the time. At last she sat down a moment, rested, and then, strange to say, got up on both feet without assistance and commenced to run around the room again. As an experiment, I took the cuffs off, and she was as unwilling to try to walk as before. We could not possibly induce her to take a single step without the cuffs. When, however, we allowed her to put them on she seemed to be greatly delighted and walked and ran as before. The result was that I gave her an old pair of cuffs to put on and allowed her to wear them for two days. This was the only way we could keep her from crawling. After that time she seemed to be able to get along without the cuffs, and has not crawled any since. She had not stood alone before and could not be induced to try it.”

It is evident that in this case, the nervous and muscular mechanism for standing and walking alone were perfected without practice in these acts, and that this mechanism came into action as soon as the proper conditions existed. The child was thinking nothing about standing or walking, but was absorbed in accomplishing certain things, viz.: getting the cuffs, putting them on and carrying them around the room, and the motor mechanism responded perfectly without any specific direction from consciousness. No doubt any thought of what she was doing or how to do it would have interfered with the perfect action of the motor mechanism, as was evidently the case when the cuffs were removed. The same conditions exist when a man who can walk a plank a foot wide on the ground, finds it difficult or impossible to walk a similar plank a hundred feet from the ground. A somnambulist, on the other hand, can walk a narrow surface high above the ground, because his consciousness does not interfere with the perfect action of the motor mechanism.

It seems as if animals know how to swim by instinct, and human beings have to learn, but many instances are known of boys, and even men, who have never swum at all, being suddenly left in the water and with minds occupied wholly with the thought of reaching the shore, they swam skillfully; and probably every one has the necessary nervous and muscular organism for swimming more or less ready to work when in the water, provided consciousness and the thought of danger of sinking or getting strangled do not interfere with the perfect action of the mechanism. We are the heir of all the ages, muscularly as well as intellectually, and possess by inheritance, in some degree, all the powers of

movement exercised by our human and pre-human ancestry.

**Developing
speech**

In getting command of the great variety of movements involved in learning to talk a child usually spends several years before he can speak all the common words plainly. Every normal child learns to talk whether taught or not, hence there must be an instinctive tendency to vocal expression. Since, however, a child learns the language that he hears, whether it be his native or a foreign tongue, it is clear that the vocal apparatus is not definitely organized for the utterance of any specific language. There is evidently, however, a predetermined relation existing between whatever sounds he hears, and the muscles involved in their articulation; otherwise he would not imitate. Imitations of movements perceived visually must also depend upon a certain relation between the visual sensation of the movements and the muscles involved in making them. In other words, a child not only tries to imitate because of an instinctive tendency to be affected by others, but inherited connections help him to succeed.

We find then that although children have to learn much more than do animals regarding movements, yet they owe much more of their success to native connections of parts than has usually been supposed. In the case of playful activity, chance plays an important part in unifying the simple movements involved in the performance of useful acts, but trying to gain desired ends or do what someone else does, naturally tends to unification of movements and hastens voluntary control of actions. Commands and directions can play but a small part in the acquiring of voluntary control of actions by young children. They need little specific training. Let them have

plenty of interesting things to do, and let them see how others do things that they want to do, and they will acquire effective control of all parts of their bodies.

As a rule they need no urging or showing to learn to move their eyes in seeing, their hands in touching and grasping, or their legs in walking and climbing. Nature provides that the child shall learn all these things as fast as the nerve centers are sufficiently developed and the muscles strong enough.

In learning to talk and to use spoon, knife and other utensils, to button garments, lace shoes and so forth, spontaneous imitation plays a large part, while some voluntary effort in trying to accomplish the desired object is needed. The parent should put before the child proper models and encourage him by the natural rewards of success, but it is not usually necessary or helpful for him to direct and drill the child very much. The child learns to move the vocal organs so as to utter words fairly well, by spontaneous imitation, but he often requires the stimulus of some necessity to induce him to make the necessary effort to speak plainly and extend his vocabulary. The parent should therefore not continue to let the child have what he wants in response to grunts and gestures, but should seem not to understand until the child makes the proper effort to utter the right word.

The process of acquiring voluntary control of the various parts of the body continues into adult life. In all cases, however, in the movements of throwing, catching, striking, sewing, drawing, writing, and in all forms of gymnastics and athletic and manual work, skill and accuracy are best acquired through imitation and effort to accomplish certain results rather than through detailed directions and training

**The part of
imitation**

**Lessons for
parents**

in the elements of the complex motions involved in these acts. This is the way in which the power of voluntary control has developed in the race and the way in which it develops most naturally and easily in the individual. It is not best to set before the child a standard of accuracy that is too high, for in his effort to accomplish the end in detail he loses the grace and skill that come from using all parts freely. Even the smallest movements of a few muscles are naturally related to the attitude and movements of all parts of the body. A child who tries to make with accuracy small letters loses freedom by trying to hold other parts still, yet in the effort to move the fingers just right he often makes unnecessary associated movements of tongue and lips. If he succeeds it is largely because he becomes able to use the small group of muscles controlling the fingers by themselves in making a letter at a time. To get freedom and rapidity of complex movements of this or any other kind the child should be allowed to use the large muscles in making coarser movements, and gradually bring the smaller muscles into play in executing the details of the movement. No attempt should be made to get the child to perform accurately the finer movements. On the contrary, the ultimate health, grace and skill demand that the child shall move freely in doing somewhat crudely acts that do not demand fine muscular adjustment and that he shall progress gradually toward better execution of such acts. As long as he is changing for the better all is well, but if he begins to settle down to a habit of execution that is far from perfect, he should be given a fresh stimulus to improve.

IDEALS OF CHILD TRAINING

QUOTATIONS

"All who know anything of the gross misunderstandings of children of which many so-called intelligent adults are capable, will bear me out when I say that a certain gift of penetration is absolutely indispensable. The observer of children must be a diviner, a sort of clairvoyant reader of their sweet thoughts."—*Sully*.

"The social ideal is a generation of young persons possessed of the human wealth of strong and beautiful bodies, well trained hands and eyes and ears and voices, informed morals, warm hearts, and reverent spirits—in a word young persons prepared for the most serious of life's purposes, the work and play, thought and emotion, repetition and *original* creation."—*C. Hanford Henderson*.

"To provide children with a contented acquiescence in a regular life and an habitual disposition to obedience requires of parents no qualities of mind which are not common to all of us mortals. The first habits which parents are to form in the training of their children are their own. If we wish to avoid, in later years, the necessity for resorting to government by spasm, and to establish instead, government by habit, we do not have to begin by experimenting on a helpless child. We can begin fortunately by experimenting on ourselves. * * * We all know how hard it is to break up a bad habit: fortunately it is just as difficult to break up a good one."—*Ernest Hamlin Abbott* in "*On the Training of Parents*."



A LOVE UNCHANGING
From a Photograph from Life.

VIII

THE CALL TO AMERICAN PARENTS

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EW America is not a merely rhetorical expression. The America we know is not the America we knew in our youth, and the America our children will know will be something different from ours. We live in a changing nation because we live in a changing order. America is what America is *becoming*.

The change in
family
relations

For this, if for no other reason, the relation of the family to the nation is both dynamic and passive. It, too, is changing as it is affected by the forces that are making tomorrow. But it is itself also the source of change. A disintegrating home means a disintegrating society. A new generation will carry out into the world ideals or vulgarity which it has learned at home. The most superficial observer will not deny that the family as exemplified in American homes is passing through a transformation, which, although not beyond control, is full of portent for American society.

It is this double fact of transformation of the family which is both in process and yet not beyond control and of a direct influence of the family upon social transformation, that constitutes the call to American parents. The call, in brief, is one to an increased realization of the responsibilities of parenthood in a social order that has changed the conditions in which parental responsibilities were once

exercised and yet needs parental influence as an aid in maintenance of social ideals.

As to what these changed conditions may be that set new problems to American fathers and mothers, it is not necessary to discuss in detail. It must suffice to describe briefly some of the most important.

Prolongation
of parental
youth

1. There is, first, the prolongation of parental youth. It is not merely because we parents are not so old as our parents lived to be that we regard ourselves as relatively younger than they. The break in interests between growing children and their parents is not as marked as formerly. As we all know, the parent himself has many interests in common with his children, especially as they enter the college age. The enormous development of sport leads fathers to share in something which their sons regard as of prime importance, even though their participation in sports be that of observers only. Golf has added a generation to the play period of American men, while the universal interest in baseball and athletics of various sorts serves to perpetuate a comradeship between fathers and sons which the older days forbade. Mothers no longer find their interests limited to home and church. Their clubs and social duties keep them alert and their attitude of mind youthful.

The immediate effect of this change from authority to comradeship between parents and children has never, to my knowledge, been particularly studied, but it raises the question how far the new spirit of comradeship can preserve the legitimate elements of the older parental authority. If your son can outbox you, outrun you, and outgolf you, what becomes of that fear of the father that was once the beginning of filial obedience?

2. A second change is the substitution of social for parental oversight of children. In this respect our modern civilization has moved toward the ideals of Plato's Republic. We look to society for our children's education in book learning and for such education in morals and religion as they may chance to receive. We rely upon clubs and Boy Scouts for vitalizing righteousness with athletics, and upon municipalities for playgrounds, playhouses and instruction in playing. So far have we moved from the older conception that parents have responsibilities in this particular that it takes no special powers of prophecy to foresee a future in which the home shall be the place where children are born, sleep, eat two meals a day, and are cared for during the period of infancy. And the State is already providing nurseries and kindergartens where mothers may be relieved of the care of their infants during part of the day.

Substitution
of social for
parental
oversight

While we must regard this increase of the parental activities of the communities as a welcome good in the case of the poor, it is none the less a symptom of a radical change in the conception of parental responsibilities, and an appreciable influence in lessening the sense of parental obligation.

3. A third element of change is the industrialization of womanhood. The economic implications of such a change are receiving an ever-increasing attention, although unfortunately even in this regard society still works in the spirit of the opportunist. From the point of view of the family, however, the results are far less understood. True, we begin to see that the replacement of parental authority by community care is closely allied with the development of the industrialization of woman's life. But we have yet to develop ethical concepts and even

Industrializa-
tion of woman

social conventions for the family in which both father and mother are wage earners. It is no solution of the problem to insist that the increased family income will permit the employment of unmarried women to care for the children. That, in the nature of the case, is only another phase of the general transformation of the sense of parental responsibilities.

4. The increasing prevalence of divorce complicates the situation among families which are not Roman Catholic. Parental responsibility cannot be assumed by both members of divorced couples. There has yet to be invented a code which shall teach the children which of their various remarried fathers and mothers they are to honor. The increasing number of deparented children is a constant evidence that the obligation of parenthood is secondary to the individual interests of fathers and mothers.

These four elements of our new situation are by no means the only forces affecting the American family and through it American society, but they are sufficiently strong to cause apprehension lest the family should not be a helpful factor in the transformation of society. He would indeed be a wise man who could give advice fitted to forestall all the dangers involved, but one thing seems axiomatic: A society will not rise higher than its families. Barring the matter of divorce I neither see nor want to see a change in the general situation. Fathers and mothers should continue to enjoy the richer life granted them by our modern world. To protect and support our offspring is not the only function of those of us who are parents. We have our own individual lives, which as lives go, are just as sacred as those of our children. But we need to adjust the profession of parenthood to our other professions and avocations.

Prevalence of
divorce

The fourfold
call

The call to American parents is really fourfold. First is the call to the establishment of a parental authority that shall presuppose comradeship and be defensible as just. Fathers and mothers should be the friends of their children, but they should be something more. In our illumined world there is danger lest the command that children honor their parents should be revised into the command, "Parents humor your infants and send out questionnaires about adolescents." The word "authority," I admit, just now is not very popular, pedagogically speaking, but I am convinced that there will be no more regard for authority in the nation than there is regard for authority in the nation's homes. The American parent has proved unfaithful to the State, to say nothing about his children, when he has given his sons and daughters a monthly allowance and has then let them do what they please. Even in our modern disillusioned families there is plenty of need for children to learn that experience counts for something; that fathers and mothers know more than their children as to the proper time to go to bed, proper persons to play with, proper things to eat, proper books to read, and proper plays to see. The authority of experience can always be shown by parents to be based on justice. It takes more patience to exercise this order of authority and to explain the reason for its exercise than it does to punish children or to be good natured and let them do whatever they like. But the call to such patience and to accompanying firmness in dealing with children, whether small or large, is not to be ignored. Children who wheedle their parents into letting them act foolishly are being educated to bribe legislatures into letting them act lawlessly. There is, therefore, need

for the moral education of parents, as well as of children. Just as charity testifies to the failure of our present industrial order, the need of turning boys and girls over to clubs to keep them out of mischief is a tribute to the decline of American parenthood. How many good-natured American papas would serve as substitutes for the Hebrew father as the moral symbol of God?

Wrong
standards
of living

A second call to American parents is to the maintenance of a rational standard of living. Thrift is all but extinct in the average American family. We not only live up to our income, but we live beyond it. Too many of us neither practice nor inculcate self-denial. We let our boys and girls grow up with no clear conception of the value of money, and send them out into the world slaves to wants which as parents we have no right to develop even for ourselves. The rising generation of Americans is being trained to enter life with the same standard of living, the same social ambitions, the same scale of expense, as their parents have attained only in their maturity. If we have nothing else to bequeath our children we ought to leave them a rational standard of living. The boy who sees his father borrow money to buy a motor car is being taught that a penny saved is a penny lost. Thrift may be a bourgeoisie virtue, but we have not yet established a Utopia in which it will be unnecessary for our children to pay their bills.

Contagious
moral idealism
needed

A third call to American parents is to educate children in a contagious moral idealism. We hear a vast amount of advice to the effect that children are to be taught the mysteries of sex. There are few subjects more in the foreground of some educational philosophies. It almost seems as if the sum and substance of the training which parents should give their children is physiological. There is, of course, an ele-

ment of need here, and this I would not minimize, but I profoundly believe that the maintenance of moral ideals in families will do vastly more for the maintenance of chastity than a perpetual discussion of eugenics. After all, the great principles that build up individuals and nations are not physiological or neurological, important as these may be. A healthy virtue never rested finally on a healthy body. We still are souls, even though we may have lost the definition of what souls are. It is a mistake to teach boys and girls to substitute physiology for the decalogue. Lives grounded in moral idealism withstand temptation far better than lives which have been taught only a prudential chastity. Though parents have the tongues of physicians and though children know all sex mysteries and have not cleanness of mind it profiteth nothing. And cleanness of mind is caught rather than taught. So too is the spirit of family love. If parents want their children happily married they must make their own marriage happy. A home in which the father and mother maintain the courtesies born of Christian ideals, is a far safer place for growing boys and girls than a family in which such relations are cheapened by commonplace quarrelling. American parents need to wear their company manners at home. A disintegrating love between parents will reappear in selfishness and vulgarity, if nothing worse, in the children. This may seem old fashioned to those that believe that children can be enlightened into moral enthusiasms. For my part I believe that such enthusiasms are contagious—a form of life, rather than of intellectualism. Fathers and mothers are not merely men and women who have had children; they are parents with a home to maintain and ideals to bequeath.

Establishment
of family
religion
necessary

A fourth call to American parents is to the establishment of family religion. Such an appeal can come only to those who are committed to the religious view of life, but a society in which there is no leaven of religious families will never be made thoroughly religious by Sunday schools and revival meetings. A meeting-house religion is not the moral equal of a dwelling-house religion. Take men and women as you find them, and you will too often discover that the religion of the average American family is either a survival of its grandfather's or is less in evidence. Unless all signs fail, during the past few years there has been a rapidly progressing obliteration of family religion, both in the form of family prayer and that of saying grace at meat. We do not even expect our children to sit with us in the family pew. The rush of our daily life, the creation of new and imperative interests, even the rise of Sunday schools, have conspired to this end. This is not to say that fathers and mothers are not religious, but rather to say that they are religious away from home. They can talk about religion to other people's children more readily than to their own. Yet a religion that does not find its expression in the family group is not likely to propagate itself beyond the second and third generation.

The proper
status of
the family

This fourfold call to American parents constitutes a demand that the family, as the family, be given its proper status in American society. But such reinstatement cannot be made by law. It must be a matter of the conscience of individual fathers and mothers. The center of their interests must pass from their wants and enjoyments as men and women to their obligation as fathers and mothers, to the needs of the child, or better to the need of the family as a unit. Divorce is a domesticated pathological in-

dividualism. It can mostly be prevented by sanctified common sense, the practice of commonplace self-sacrifices, and a revived devotion to the upbringing of children. If parents should make such a shift of emphasis from the individual to the family needs, many of the difficulties implicit in the changes through which American society is now passing, will be offset. There is no cure for the evils of progress except the moralizing of the forces of progress. The family is one of the agencies by which every individual parent may make his contribution—be it ever so humble—to this moral rebirth. The church must grapple with one of its old time duties; it must evangelize parental as well as civic relations; it must train men and women to educate the children in their own homes, as well as to rescue other people's children from evil homes. In a word, it must make the family that which Jesus made it, the symbol of the Kingdom of God.—[From "*Religious Education*," by permission.]

IX

THE USEFULNESS OF IDEALS OF CHILD TRAINING

MARY HARMON WEEKS

Tragedy of
ideals with-
out methods



YOUNG mother who had heard a talk on the necessity of teaching children to be obedient, stood with a baby in arms, two tots clinging to her skirts, and tears in her eyes, as she said to the speaker, "When Abe and I were engaged, we saw how bad most of our friend's children were, and we said to each other, 'When we are married, we will have good children.' Now look at this Minnie," pointing to the eldest midget. "She bosses me and I can't make her mind. She isn't good. How can I make her good?" The pathos of this separation of ideals made the heart ache. To have had the ideal of goodness with no ideals as to making goodness created a feeling of doubled helplessness. But surely the clearly formulated ideal for good children will help that young father and mother to find a way when once its direction is indicated.

The moral of the story is clear. What Abe had was more or less hazy ideals as to results; what he lacked was clear cut ideals as to methods. The writer is aware that she is treading on slippery ground when she insists that preconceived, definite notions as to methods of training children are a necessary part of equipment for work. She hears the familiar refrain "But children are so different." "No two of my children are alike or do the same

thing in the same way, or are influenced by the same appeals." "They cannot be dealt with on the same plans."

Let us admit it instantly and get it out of the way. Let us also admit with Sully "that we are wont to talk rather glibly about that abstraction 'the child,' as if all children rigorously correspond to one pattern, of which pattern we have a perfect knowledge," and with Arthur Giles that "in morals, as in medical pathology, the patient and not the disease must be treated." How tame the world would be if we were all alike! But how fortunate for the people who must live in the world that we are only, as individuals, partly different—are still essentially so similar that we require in all our comrades the same basic qualities, the same generic beliefs, habits and customs, our differences being the mere surface embroideries which give attractiveness to the ensemble, the light and shade which give variety to the landscape of life. Perhaps the study of his children's heredity might enable the parent to prepare himself for at least a tentative solution of some of the difficulties which the individual peculiarities of some of his children may be expected to present. In making it he might arrive at some unexpected conclusions as to the obstacles which he himself presents to the easy reaching of a right conclusion.

I suppose that all right-minded people will agree that children should be trained to be obedient, self-controlled, truthful and honest since the consensus of opinion has pronounced these habits to be those which are necessary to congregate living. They are taught somewhat by precept—somewhat by example, and their ease of acquirement depends partly upon physical health, mental traits and certain nervous ten-

Children
much alike
as problems

Three
cardinal
habits to be
cultivated

dencies which mark differences in individuality. Certainly the kind of precept and the kind of example and the kind of physical help give sufficient uniformity upon which to base ideals of training, while differences of mental traits and nervous tendencies in children will furnish the mental stimuli necessary to originate special adaptations for special problems and keep parents from fossilizing methods.

Whether it is due to a lack of understanding of the necessity, an overwhelming sense of the too-bigness of the problem, or a prevailing refusal of obligations, due to a shiftlessness of conscience, we cannot say, but that there is a general refusal to face the problems of child training, to understand them, to find their approximate solutions, and to put these into action, is evident. The writer believes that, as a class, parents are in such matters largely unmoral, almost wholly shiftless. Perhaps this is due to the fact that we so seldom form preconceived ideals as to methods of training, and wait till the children are here, until the necessity for training arises, when there is no time to formulate methods, and we use desperation instead of reason.

Ideals of
obedience

Is it not feasible and extremely desirable to formulate true obedience, to analyze its desirability, and to outline a general plan for accomplishment before children come to us, and from the moment the baby takes its first breath, to put it into action? Ernest Hamlin Abbott says, "The reason why we parents so often fail in securing obedience, and what is more important still, in developing in our children the spirit of obedience, is that we are deficient in imagination—or at least what imagination we have is untrained. If we are going to appeal to a child's imagination in teaching him how to obey, we must

exercise some imagination in giving commands." To the usual heedless parent, no such thought has ever occurred. A perusal of Mr. Abbott's chapter on "By Rule of Wit" might well be made a part of parental education for the formation of true ideals.

Can we not honestly state for ourselves the degree of truthfulness that can be required of children, trim our own conduct to meet the needs of example, predetermine the forces that must be brought to bear on the childish mind, before the necessity for using them occurs? When the occasion comes it will be sufficiently cumbered by the special emergencies of the case to make a definite theory a tremendous help.

Almost every other good habit traces itself back to self control, making its acquirement one of the essentials of success in the formation of others. Would not a study of the psychologic processes involved in self control, the physical and mental conditions that strengthen or modify the power of self control, a clear recognition of one's own limitations in this direction, and persistent efforts to overcome them, be a strong parental equipment for dealing with this difficult problem which confronts every father and mother at the birth of each child? And would not the mere recognition of self control as a definite problem in child training, save us many a humiliating experience, in which our own lack of self control has rendered nugatory, strenuous but misguided efforts to make precept work without example.

If such definite study of methods of child training were a prerequisite of child having, if such forming of clear and well defined ideals as to results to be accomplished did nothing more than to establish the fact that most disobedience, untruthfulness, dishonesty and lack of self control are due to the phys-

Truthfulness

**Equipment
for teaching
self-control**

**Physical
condition
and bad habits**

ical conditions—the food, health, sleeping rooms, dress, personal relations in the home—which we provide for our children, to the examples we set them, the temptations which we create for them, the opportunities for deceit and wrongdoing which we offer them, and to our usual failure to understand child nature, its means and methods, we shall have gone a long way on the road to better things.

Experts have fully discussed all these external influences upon the development of good habits; and for what purpose, if not to prepare parents for parenthood by forming ideals as to means and methods of child training?

To all parents who have forgotten their own childhood and who wish boy children, we recommend William Allen White's "The Court of Boyville," Shute's "Diary of a Real Boy," and Zollinger's "Widow O'Callaghan's Boys." Not for the funniness or the pranks portrayed in them. Most fathers remember such features of their boyhood but too well. Read between the lines the skillful portrayal of boyhood's inner thought, its springs of action, its levers of influence. The troubles of Emmy Lou may open our eyes to the problems which are as real to our little girls as are any of our own to us. Indeed, they are our own. In such books are to be found the informing power which the parent most needs in order to be successful.

To quote rather freely from Edward Howard Griggs' "Moral Education"—"In proportion to the good that may come from the work is the severity of its demand in preparation. The parent or teacher should have a complete logical organization of the material in the background of his own consciousness. He must not only know what he may hope to accom-

Books
for parents

Philosophy
of life
necessary

plish, and have a clear conception of the method by which he should set about it, he must have come to terms with the universe intellectually and have formulated in some measure a conscious philosophy of life. He must see intellectually the great ends of human conduct, the paths by which those ends may be attained, and the laws that condition us in following the paths. That the thought and study necessary to our preparation for the ethical teaching of our children are illuminating and educative to ourselves in the highest degree, is another truth, aside from our problem, though greatly comforting.'"

X

BASIC HABITS TO BE CULTIVATED FROM THE BEGINNING

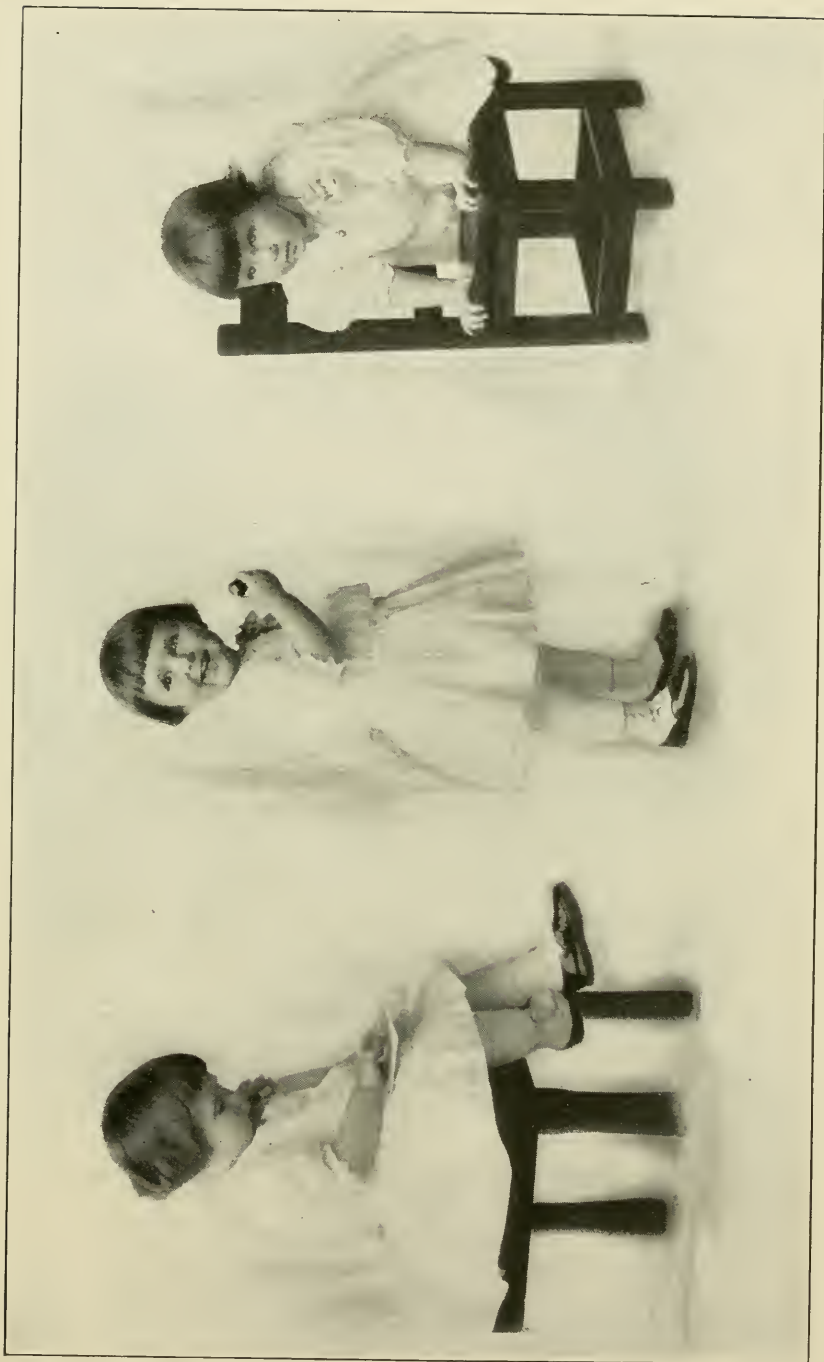
MARY HARMON WEEKS

Ideals alone
not enough

“ HE ideal is only half. It must be related to power or it is only good to talk about. Moral ideals are older than flying machines. They are, in many men's cases, very definite. They are clear from the earliest years of manhood—as clear as they ever become afterward. The man wants to follow them. He hopes to. He means to. But in the stress of life he finds he has no power to rise on the wings of his ideal. And so, in many cases, again, he regretfully sets them aside as an impractical dream. The Sermon on the Mount? Why, it can't be made a part of modern life. The Beatitudes? No everyday existence can soar to their height. Self forgetting, passionate consecration? Why, how shall a man pull himself up to that altitude? He cannot. Until the moral ideal is geared to moral power it will not work. Nor will it work if only half geared. There must be an absolute relation, constant and structural. The man may get morality and to spare, but without an ounce of lifting power. Morality is the aeroplane before the motor is put in. It is built to soar, meant to soar, but without the power, there it lies, and the natural man laughs at it.”—*The Outlook*.

Earliest
lessons

If the baby finds its first haven in the arms of a trained nurse, its earliest lessons will be those of obedience and self control, and the physician will



"BEGINNINGS"

From a Photograph from Life.

sustain the lesson by instructions for regular habits. The two of them realize perhaps more fully than the young father and mother how much of the health and happiness of the little one and of its family will depend upon the right beginnings and unswerving enforcement of these habits.

Tempering love with sanity, the far-seeing father and mother will begin immediately to establish for the little mite that grip on himself and on his relations to the people around him, which in the years to come will count more than any other two habits in making him a satisfactory son, a safe companion and a good citizen. Certainly no others will contribute more to the comfort of the growing child and his family.

Said a young man on his way to prison, "If my mother had taught me to be obedient when I was a child at her knee, instead of weakly allowing me to have my own way, I should not now be on the road to the penitentiary."

The saving
power of
obedience

A harassed little mother of a disobedient, self-willed boy of five, in seeking advice as to his correction, said "When he was a baby, his naughty little ways were so cute that we could do nothing but laugh at him. If I could have foreseen what trouble that laughing would make us, he would have been a different boy. Oh! tell all the young mothers that the kindest thing they can do for themselves and their children is to teach the babies to be obedient and self-controlled from their very first breath."

Self control stands in such close connection with obedience, each almost presupposing the other, that they can scarcely be separated in a statement as to their value. But it is safe to say that no parent can discharge his full duty to his children, who has not a

Self-control
and the well
developed man

clearly defined notion of the meaning, scope and value of self control as a determining factor in a successful life, and some understanding of the slow, steady, persistent efforts necessary to establish it.

The all round, well developed man, means one who has a command of all the faculties, sensations, and actions of his being and can direct them at will to their most effective uses. He can control appetite for self conservation rather than as a means of gratification which leads to defective bodily powers. He can direct his action through calm judgment, and thus preserve a reasonable attitude toward his fellow man. He can so employ his mental equipment as to make it serve his need in every emergency, that his life may be free from the regrets of the man whose weak will carries with it the mistakes and failures, the missing of opportunities, the lack of harmonious relations with his fellows, which accompany the steps of all who lack self containment.

Difficulties of
decisions as to
truth and
honesty

Predecisions as to truthfulness and honesty are difficult. Life offers so many complexities, that each act requiring either truthfulness or honesty seems to stand apart in its requirements, to be decided on its own merits. So many questions of truthfulness offer a choice between two truths, and honesty is so often a question of two rights, that we sometimes lose ourselves in the maze of questioning.

Yet the world has decided that, however these two habits may trip us in individual cases, the whole fabric of communal life is based on them as the two essential qualities of human relationship. As parents, we must be firmly grounded in the belief that there are ideals of truthfulness and of honesty lying outside of special, individual problems, which are absolutely necessary to the welfare of individual and col-

lective humanity, and that we must, in some way, early communicate these ideals to our children. And just because these two most essential characteristics of human conduct offer the greatest puzzles in child training, do they most need definite thought as to ways and means of creating them, and of meeting the many contingencies which common experience tells us every parent will encounter.

The necessity for truthfulness and honesty in our relations with our fellows, is based upon the necessity for stability, fairness, the rights of others for the sake of our own, the good of the whole as a good for each, the comfort of life as depending on others, the confidence of others as essential to one's own successes—all these primary reasons remain effective and can be formulated for every case, however complicated by special conditions. These necessities are so simple, are so within the experience of every child, that their presentation in terms of life should not be beyond the powers of any parent, if definitely realized before the occasion for use arises.

Truthfulness and honesty are not to be regarded as instincts. They are not *per se* moral or immoral. They are, however, habits to be acquired. "Truthfulness," says Mary Wood Allen, "is not an emotion, not an impulse of the moral nature, but is really an intellectual effort to realize things as they are, and another effort to express that recognition accurately. It is therefore not reasonable to expect the immature mind to manifest truthfulness in perfection. Truthfulness is as much a mental process as is the solution of mathematical problems. We must expect that the child will make mistakes, just as he does in addition and subtraction, but we must keep on teaching and expect him to grow, just as we expect him to learn the multiplication table."

Truthfulness
an intellectual
effort

Child's
difficulty in
understanding
honesty

The same thing is true of honesty. It is directly opposed to the primal instinct, which is selfish. It requires an intellectual effort to establish it as a requirement of social life. Can we ever quite appreciate the mental summersault which the little fellows must execute in passing from the stage where every detail of the material world about them is simply something to be grasped, to the complexities of "mine and thine"? How doubly difficult is this passage made by our failure to early recognize any property rights of the child.

Obedience must be taught by precept and practice, but the acquirement of habits of self control, honesty and truthfulness are based upon the examples afforded in home life, precepts being used merely for reinforcement, as reason develops.

THE FAMILY IN TRAINING

QUOTATIONS

"The erroneous sense of proprietorship with which parents are wont to regard their children is a source of many mistakes in their management. If the point of view of privileged guardianship should supersede that of ownership, it is probable that the children of today would be accorded a uniform degree of respect and consideration, which would give them a clearer idea of justice and would better fit them for parental duties and citizenship than the extravagant endearments frequently lavished upon them one hour, to be followed by indiscriminate punishment the next."—*Mrs. Theodore W. Birney.*

"If one were to go to Theodore Roosevelt and ask him to name the country's greatest need he would reply in his quick, conclusive way, 'Clean men.' He knows. Smart men there are by the thousands; rich men abound more than in any other age of the world; able men are found in every state and township, but even from a population of eighty millions the chief executive has difficulty in finding the man of exceptional character for a post which requires a square and flawless morality. It is to his credit that he misses no opportunity to preach clean manhood. But neither presidents nor preachers nor teachers can do the work of fathers except in their own families. * * *

"A mother, being human, is bound to make mistakes. It is well for her to recognize this fact, and to be neither discouraged and cast down on the one hand, nor self-indulgent and excuseful on the other. There is nothing more educational than a mistake properly thought out and accepted. All that a mother need require of herself is that she shall see her mistake, and, recognizing it, make it her teacher. She should face the defects in her home-making fairly and frankly, and, in an entirely impersonal way, eliminate them one by one. In this way only can she

fulfill the obligations of her motherhood and become the really wise mother."—*Ladies' Home Journal*.

"Mothers, so cultivate the rational element in yourselves that you can see that every fault in your child is simply the lack of some virtue. In the inner chamber of your own souls study your children; confess their faults to yourselves, not to your neighbors, and ask what is lacking, that these defects exist. Like Nehemiah of old, build up the wall where it is weakest: if your child is selfish, it is unselfishness that he needs; if he is untruthful, it is accuracy which is lacking; perhaps he is tyrannical to the younger brother or sister, it is the element of nurture or tenderness which should be 'developed.'"—*Elizabeth Harrison*.

"That the Family should exercise a narrowing and selfish influence over its members is inevitable so long as one of the partners responsible for it is excluded from intelligent participation in the work of the state, and sees in public services only rival claims to those of the Family. Get rid of that narrowing and selfish influence and the family will become, to an extent never before known, the source and inspiration of noble and enlightened service to the state. And on the other hand, in proportion as this is true, the state will recognize the infinite importance of the Family and cease from those invidious attacks upon it which arise from ignorance of its true function."—*Elizabeth McCracken* in "*Women of America*."

XI

THE CHARACTER-FORMING POSSIBILITIES OF HOME LIFE

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(A reference paper)



THE importance of the early years spent by the child in the family has been long appreciated, but even discerning parents have scarcely yet comprehended in what subtle ways the social forces of family life co-operate to fix the fabric and texture of the child's life or how permanent withal are the influences which operate in these earliest years.

The growth of children is in truth a many-sided affair. Their bodily development is dependent upon nourishing food, proper clothing and an abundance of exercise and fresh air. The social and spiritual atmosphere which surrounds them is also fully as important, for their minds and bodies are clearly dependent upon each other, and a cheerful buoyant mental life acts upon the body and makes it respond more readily to nourishment and exercise. A child may be ever so well fed and clothed and yet fail to develop normally because of defects in his family environment. His soul craves kindness and parental love and without this his bodily functions cannot go on at their best. There is, of a truth, no sadder sight than that of a little boy or girl, well cared for physically, but with every lineament of the face showing

The growth
of children
many sided

hunger for warm and wise parental affection. Denied this the spirit lacks a something which causes all the rest of the bodily and mental development to be distorted.

Moral training
in the home
rests chiefly
on its moral
social
relationships

The peculiar power of the home for moral training rests upon its social relationships. Good conduct and right ideals of life are essentially social matters. It is in the child's relationship to other people that he first learns what it is to do right and it is in daily living with others that he has the opportunity to practice morality. The "give and take" of normal family life is the ideal medium for acquiring and fixing for all time the habits and ideals of a wholesome life. After all the intelligent practice of right conduct is the goal of all the home's efforts at child-training.

Conditions
furnished
by a normal
home

The first conditions furnished by the normal home is its intimate, confidential, human associations. The more general, less intimate association with people outside its walls can never be as effective in character building. Children get their first conception of human duties and of life's broader responsibilities through participating in the life of the family. The family not merely is the nursery of the physical child, it is even more the nursery of all those qualities which go to make up a fine human nature.

The home which accomplishes such a training must of course be more than a mere economic collection of individuals. We do not, however, have in mind the home in which the parents have more than average discretion and insight into the principles of child-training. We mean the *normal home*, (we can hardly any longer call it the average), the home formed by honest, hard-working parents whose lives are ruled by ideals and who are anxious to do their

very best for their children, who believe it is the main purpose of their lives to rear a happy group of right-minded children, who indeed look at this in no sense as a burden or as a restriction upon their performing some larger, more ostentatious duties, but rather as their very highest privilege. The *normal home* wherever it still exists is a definite center of spiritual life participated in by a little community of people, parents and children. It has naturally various material interests. There are usually insistent economic necessities, there is work to do in which all share in different ways and degrees. These, however, are but expressions of its deeper spiritual purpose, *they are the ways through which the common collective life of parents and children realizes itself.*

There is reason to believe that in this country we are losing the old ideals of home life. The integrity of the family is being threatened, but not primarily by the divorce court. There are deeper lying menaces of many kinds, and different homes are affected by them in different ways. There is perhaps first of all the stress of modern industrial life which requires so many parents and even children to spend a large portion of their time completely outside of its walls and away from its influences. Where parents and children cannot gather at least once or twice a day for meals and where they cannot spend a part of their evenings together, the spiritual unity of the home is seriously threatened.

There are the "social duties" of the great middle and "upper" classes, and these are fully as insidious a menace to the development of true family life as the unfavorable industrial life. Then again, we should not forget the increasing tendency of the modern city to destroy not only the quiet privacy of the

Menaces to
the integrity
of the home

home but also to remove from it its old time independence. The present-day family is less a center of busy life than it used to be. It has less to do with the preparation of its food and clothing, it has left to it only a few of the thousand and one tasks of inner maintenance in which it once engaged and which diversified its life and gave to each child a real chance to be helpful. True, the family relieved of these duties, often hard and exacting, has more time left for "other things" but it is doubtful if these "other things" have furnished adequate compensations for the loss sustained. The interests which were formerly centered around the family hearth have been scattered; the freer, easier life has broken down the spiritual unity of former days.

It is not a mere theory when we say that a thousand attractions induce the parents and children to leave the family fireside. In many households the home is no longer the place for the keenest enjoyment, the point toward which each turns with regret when he finds he must needs be absent. There are other ways to get amusement, sociability, and even intellectual satisfaction, ways which seem fuller and richer; and the family finds only too late, how evanescent and hollow these opportunities prove to be. In many homes the old-time spiritual values have been lost only gradually. Easier economic conditions enabled parents and children to taste occasionally at first and then more and more frequently of outside allurements, which, because they were as yet untried, seemed to offer something better than the quiet enjoyment of home life.

In this latter day parents are complaining that their children are no longer duly respectful or obedient, that they are wild and coarse of taste. We

often hear it said that parents have erred in not being as strict and stern with their children as they used to be. *But the real virtue in the old home was not in its sternness, but in its spiritual unity.* Our children are suffering from the lack of this unity, rather than from a mere weakening of discipline, although the weaker discipline is one of the results of lack of spiritual unity.

What then can be done to retain, or to restore if it has been lost, the spiritual unity of home life? Individual parents cannot, of course, do much to change the general social life of their time. They cannot, if they would, reinstate old industrial methods. Current conditions are changing, it is true, for better or worse through the interaction of myriads of men and women. Something infinitesimal is accomplished for the better by each person who lives true to his ideals. But, desirable as it is to have a large and active idealism and to strive to introduce a more healthy conduct of life in the great world of human associations, *it must not blind parents to the possibility of bettering their more immediate relationships.* They should see that their first duty is in their own homes. The larger duty to society is often remote and intangible, but *the duty to one's family is concrete and definite.* One can always do something here and now to make the home life more wholesome and more effective for child-training.

This then is our problem. If the values of home life have been lost or are endangered by changed economic and social conditions, let us try to grasp the ideal more consciously and bend determined efforts toward realizing it in spite of unfavorable external circumstances. Even though it may be difficult to do we cannot believe that this is impossible. If the home which we have described as normal is of the

How to
retain the
spiritual
unity of
home life

right type then *it can and must be preserved*. Such a proposal is of vastly more importance than any or all the reforms in public education which periodically agitate the minds of the fathers and mothers.

First of all, the parents must study and plan to conserve the moral unity of the home, for this is the mother of all character-forming influences. The collective life was fostered and furthered in the old home by the economic interests which centered about it. *There was always something to do at home which made it a center of attention and usually also of interest*. Exacting as these employments were, they made the home a spiritual as well as an economic center of life. In these enterprises there were always chances for the children to help; in fact, their help was quite essential to getting the work done. They learned not only *how to do real work*, but also how to be persevering, how to *overcome difficulties*, how to be *helpful, honest, kindly and loyal* to the family circle and its interests. In the evenings after the day's work was over, it was natural that the parents should sit together with their children about the fire-side and tell stories or read from a few choice books. In many an old-time home the only books were the Bible, "Paradise Lost," "Pilgrim's Progress," and perhaps "Robinson Crusoe"; and the frequent and loving reading aloud of these classics furnished the capstone to the wall of spiritual unity that surrounded the family circle. The children had not only their taste for enduring literature developed but they acquired in this way also a fund of sound moral principles which were bound to find expression in their work-a-day lives.

The lessons that come to us today from these pioneer homes are many, and there is no good reason why we cannot put them into practice. We are able

Conserving
the moral
unity of the
home

urnishing
substitutes
for the
activities of
earlier homes

no longer to base the spiritual unity of our family life upon a varied round of economic activities and yet every normal home must study to keep alive some of these activities of self-maintenance. The farm home still furnishes plenty of work for its boys and girls, but if the children are to have home work in the town and city it must usually be through careful foresight and planning on the part of the parents. Some have lawns to mow, flower and vegetable gardens to care for and perhaps a little poultry; there is food to cook, there is washing, ironing and mending; the rooms are to be kept clean and neat; and there are errands to run. Of course there is every tendency among all classes of people to have others hired to do these things and there is little left to the children out of school hours but to play, perhaps to loiter on the streets, or to waste time and money in various cheap entertainments of which the moving-picture show and the questionable vaudeville are all too typical.

The power of stated and regular work about home to restrain a child from mischief and wrong-doing is little appreciated in the average city household. To be sure, in the homes of the poor, many children are overworked and exhausted by out of school duties, but their condition is scarcely more pitiable than that of the children of more well-to-do families *who have no home duties*. Mr. William George has found that work and responsibility for some difficult tasks is almost a panacea for the reformation of the wayward children of rich and poor alike. His experience with delinquent children from comfortable homes points conclusively to a fatal defect in the training these homes provide. Such children are often suffering from irresponsibility. They have been used all their

Regular work
as a restraint
upon mischief

lives to having things done for them and consequently they have never acquired the art of relying on themselves in anything but mischief. We may well say that the first step in moral training is learning how to depend on one's self and how to be ready to give kindly help to others when they need it. The various phases of promptness, obedience, mutual helpfulness, truthfulness, and self-reliance can be much more vitally impressed through home duties than in any other way. There, if anywhere, the child may learn how necessary these virtues are to the welfare of everybody and how hard it is to be happy without them.

Short-sighted
spending of
over-fond
parents

Over-fond parents get a good deal of selfish pleasure out of constantly spending and allowing their children to spend money for all sorts of trivial things. They think a few pennies or nickels here and there make no difference anyway and the children seem to like it. Like it they do, but, even if it is only a matter of pennies, *they are learning to spend rather than to save and the latter lesson is always the harder one.* Every parent can a thousand times better afford to forego the selfish pleasure of indulging his children for the sake of teaching them the value of thrift. They can be paid for little services and encouraged to save their earnings. A child's own earnings should cover most of his needs in the way of books and toys, and if he is obliged to buy out of his own resources, he soon learns the art of the wise use of money.

The lessons
of our old-
time friends—
the Rollo
books

The parent of today, who would like to get in mind a concrete picture of the family life which may train and develop in its children the arts of individual and social responsibility, could not do better than read thoughtfully the *Rollo Books*, a little series

of volumes for children written more than sixty years ago by Jacob Abbott. They used to be popular in children's libraries but are in danger today of being forgotten. They trace the life of a little boy, Rollo, through the various vicissitudes of play, school, work, vacation, etc. The social atmosphere of his home, if a little overdrawn, is yet on the whole admirable and is full of food for thought.

No parent can read these books without getting hosts of practical ideas as to how to make the social life of the home a real power in the development of wholesome-minded, self-reliant boys and girls.

There are few parents who cannot *do something* to build up and preserve the character-forming influences expressed in the phrase "our home." Even if conditions are such that the children can do very little work, there is still much they can participate in that will hold them together and make them better boys and girls. More evenings can be spent together in reading and in friendly social intercourse. The parents can discuss the work of the day, even if it has had to be performed away from home. If the children have had peculiar difficulties to meet and their hearts are sore, they can be encouraged by kindly inquiries and intimate counsel. They must ever feel that the home is interested in all their varied enterprises within and without the school. Better progress in their studies would often result if they knew that father and mother had a more loving concern that they do their best. Nothing alienates a child more quickly from the home than the sense that no one cares very much what he does. On the other hand if he can be made to feel that every phase of his conduct in school and on the street *does make a difference*, does reflect upon the cheer of the home

Possibilities
of preserving
the unity of
the home
under difficult
conditions

circle, he has gained one of the most powerful of incentives for a right life.

Value of
wholesome
conversation
in the home

One of the most valuable and yet most neglected opportunities for character-formation is wholesome conversation at the table and in the evening circle. When we reflect how trivial and cheap home talk often is, we need no longer wonder that conversation is a lost art. And yet the daily verbal intercourse of parents and children can yield great returns if only a little more thought were given to it. The trouble is that most people do not appreciate the power of conversation or make any effort to develop it. To many parents, the talk of children seems trivial. Their insistent and well-meant questions are answered in an off-hand way or not at all. The distracting and teasing quality of much of the talk of children is the direct outcome of the failure of the child to find any appreciative response in his parents. We do not hold that mere child talk is of great value. *The worth appears only as it fuses with a kindly attitude in some older person who is awake to the importance of his opportunity when he holds communion with the child-mind.*

In how many homes are the precious moments together with the children frittered away upon silly gossip and coarse jests! How ready are the elders to pass back and forth comments upon the unlovely side of life, and by their laughter over situations which the children cannot and should not understand, awaken in them a curiosity which, just because it cannot be satisfied, is almost sure to work harm in the children's inner life.

In fine, this much we may say with entire assurance: *In the intimate conversation in the home the real life is laid bare*, whether it be noble or coarse and low. The things which really interest the parents,

they will usually talk about, and what the child sees the parents truly care for, he is apt to care for himself. His sense of life's values is thus largely formed and it will be very difficult for any other power to make him have a high regard for what he hears slightly referred to by his parents.

The specialist in mental diseases often finds that much of the trouble with his patients grows out of the early suppression of normal childish impulses. The parent who tries to suppress an impulse of any sort in his child may succeed in thrusting it out of the child's conscious life, but he does not really kill it. More than likely it is still working away in the recesses of his mind producing distorted and unhappy consequences in his conduct. Many things that the child may want to do are neither suitable nor right, *but the energy of the impulse, in most cases, can be used in some desirable form of activity.* What is needed most of all in the home life, is abundant opportunity to *re-direct* the child rather than to stop him point blank, when his curiosity and eagerness to do show undesirable tendencies. One of the most effective ways offered by scientific psychology for disposing of early impulses and curiosity of a sexual nature is through frank sympathetic conversation between parent and child. The air of mystery, the sense that these things must not be mentioned, and worse still the false information so often given, produce deep-seated and lasting harm to almost every phase of the child's inner life.

After all, the greatest thing needed by the father and mother is intelligent sympathy with their children. Their other mistakes will be, in part, offset if they can really enter into the lives of their boys and girls and learn to appreciate their point of view in all they are striving to do. The father, as well

Early race
impulses
used in de-
sirable forms
of activity

Sympathy
the great need

as the mother, must be the comrade of the children. Openness and frankness must characterize their intercourse. They must be absolutely truthful in all their association together. They must cultivate the art of loving and confidential talks with their boys and girls.

The
difficulties
offered by
different
characters

In all this discussion we have not been unmindful that it is easier to say than to do. The things which we have suggested are by no means easy of accomplishment, and yet it is in just these things that the parents must find their greatest opportunities for child training. To strive to accomplish something along right lines is better than to make no effort at all.

The problem of moral training in the home is made still harder by differences in the children themselves. Some are more tractable and yield more readily to right influence than others. After we have done the very best we know how to do, we shall often feel that we have fallen far short in our efforts with this or that child. And yet the fault will usually be found to lie, not in the principles here discussed, but in our own lack of insight into the needs of the troublesome youngster and to our lack of deftness in applying these principles.

Much more remains to be said on this problem of how to realize to the fullest extent the moral values of home life. But the suggestions here given touch some of its deeper aspects. They are not the suggestions of an unpractical theorist, but of one who has himself grappled and is now grappling with the problem in his own home. He is fully aware of the many difficulties involved, and it is with a deep sense of his own shortcomings that he offers this discussion to other thoughtful parents, of whom he is confident that there are many in this land.

SELF-WILL AND CHARACTER

QUOTATIONS

"Strong wills are perhaps the legitimate offspring of great clearness of understanding. Reason, duty, truth, justice, are four expressions of the will."—*Buisson*.

"The center for attack in the training of children is the will. All that happens in the home and all that is done for him must yield him a dividend of will power. Discipline, guidance, influence, must play upon the will, or the child's life problem becomes an unsolved enigma."—*W. H. Spence*.

"Say of nothing 'This is beneath me,' nor feel that anything is beyond your power, for nothing is impossible to the man who can will."—*Mirabeau*.

"More than dominion over earth, more than power over all, is the joy of conquering self."—*Phillips Brooks*.

"He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."—*Bible*.

"The acquisition of the power of controlling feeling is a difficult and slow process. Children's feelings are characterized by great intensity, and their complete possession and mastery of the mind. Hence, the effort to check the outgoings of passion is a severe one."—*Sully*.

"Parents must realize, learn, know, that youth feels as rich in his fifty years to come as he does with a legacy of fifty thousand dollars in the bank."—*Ellen Richards*.

"A method of discipline which must be inevitably abandoned as a child grows up, was not the most expedient at the early age, for the reason that, in education, the development and training of motives should be consecutive and progressive, not broken and disjointed."—*Charles Eliot*.

"The first end of education is, or ought to be, to train the mind to habits of lawful thinking—that is, to thinking in obedience to laws recognized by the mind and enforced by the will. Lack of intellectual power is very often lack of will power. To attend is 'to direct the mind.' The first art the student has to acquire is the art of bringing the mind under the direction of the will, and so making it do the work which the student assigns to it."—*Lyman Abbott*.

XII

A WEE BIT OF PSYCHOLOGY

ELIZABETH HARRISON

President of the National Kindergarten College



WE are taught in our kindergarten training to think of the inner nature or soul of the child as having infinite possibilities, yet to realize that this *ego* or inner self is born into very finite limitations of weakness, ignorance, and errors of all kinds. We are also taught that this inner self can transcend or overcome these limitations. This is what educating the child means. It is not the mere imparting of knowledge, as so many teachers and parents seem to think. Each child comes into the world with a vast storehouse of instincts, impulses, hungers, appetites and passions handed down to him by generations of good, bad and indifferent ancestors. These are the substances on which the *ego* or inner self is nourished, so to speak. They rise to the surface as the stimulus necessary to call them forth is presented. For example, jealousy can be easily roused from the nethermost depths of a child's soul by his being teased about his baby brother taking his place in his mother's arms, or it can lie dormant never to become a part of his child-life. In a like manner gluttony or control of appetite can be fostered by the way he is fed, cruelty or kindness by the way he is taught to handle his pets, miserliness or generosity by the use he is led to make of his playthings. These emotions and passions all lie asleep within the unconscious infant's soul. Heaven and

The inner self

hell are both there potentially, waiting to be called forth.

Only one law by which the inner self develops

Froebel, the founder of the kindergarten, proclaimed to an indifferent and unthinking world that there was just one *law* and only one, by means of which these possibilities of the inner self could be awakened and developed. With his mathematical tendency and habit of illustrating his thought by geometric forms he explains this *law* as "the connection of opposites." The term has been a stumbling block to all but the initiated ever since, notwithstanding the fact that he amply illustrated it in the way in which his kindergarten materials were to be used.

Philosophic writers speak of it as "the movement of mind" from the unconscious state of mind in which the *ego* or self does not separate or distinguish a sensation or idea from itself; to the second or separative stage, in which the sensation or idea is distinguished as distinct from other sensations or ideas; to the third stage, in which the inner self or *ego* becomes conscious of the sensation or idea as *its* sensation or idea. The "new education" which is based on this psychological insight claims that all moral will power and all definite knowledge must pass through these three stages before they can become a part of the child's conscious life.

In the larger, more universal outline of the nature of the *ego*, or self, psychology has termed this *law* "the psychosis," which, literally translated, means the process of the soul. In other words, it is the law or process by which all inner growth takes place.

Meaning of psychosis

"The word 'psychosis' expresses the principle by which the mind assimilates the outer world and makes it a part of itself," says Dr. Snider, in his first book on psychology. This is the way in which con-

scious life begins and by means of which it grows and there is no real *human* growth (that is, growth based on responsibility and intelligence) without this *consciousness of self as self*. This is why in law courts infants, idiots and the insane are not considered responsible for their conduct. They are not conscious of their own personality.

Having presented this rather stiff bit of psychology let me illustrate the practical value of understanding the same in our treatment of children, as it is the keynote to the kindergarten method of development, and the non-comprehension of it has caused much mistaken use of kindergarten materials as well as much misunderstanding of children in and out of kindergarten.

You can easily test this process by watching the development of any normal infant; as, for example, a young child comes into the world with the possibility of complete mastery over his body, but is at first limited and hampered in every way. He begins by the entirely unconscious and aimless tossing of his arms and legs, by the moving of his head from side to side without intent or purpose. His mother (often-times almost as unconscious of what she is doing as is the child) begins to help him out of this unconscious union with his body by teaching him to imitate this or that particular motion.

She leads him to express assent by nodding his head, or dissent by shaking it from side to side, or to ask to be lifted up by stretching out his arms, or to bid farewell by waving his hand; until little by little he gains conscious control of his body and it becomes a medium of self-expression. Or, again, take the way in which a child learns to talk. At first he utters unconscious "baby babblings." Then he be-

Practical
value of
understanding
the method of
development
of the
inner self

gins to disentangle distinct words from the confused world of sounds, and by and by masters language and makes it another means by which his real, inner self can express itself. So on continually goes the training of the young *ego* or inner self to transcend limit after limit.

When we fully understand this we watch with eager interest each tiny effort at absorption, assimilation and digestion of a new sensation or a new idea, and the consequent increase of power on the part of the *ego*, or real self of the child. Just when and how to respond to this unfolding of the child's real self is an important thing, and it is here that psychology is of so much help, although many mothers seem instinctively to do the right thing.

Basis of
judgment as
to a child's
moral re-
sponsibility

Before judging of a child's moral responsibility for his deed, or his intellectual ability by seeming results (that is, before we can justly praise him for right conduct or punish him for wrong-doing; before we can claim that he is an unusually bright child or pronounce him slow-witted), we must first know whether or not he is still in the unconscious stage of development along that particular line. If so, he is merely imitating what he has seen. If he is in this first unconscious stage of the deed, it is a desirable thing he should be let alone until such time as the repetition of the impression has developed his *ego* or inner self into the second stage.

Diverting
from unde-
sirable im-
pressions

This is why a quiet, unmolested infancy is so important. If the impressions which the child is unconsciously absorbing are undesirable, the child's attention should be quietly diverted from them and something else substituted. To scold or to punish a child in this stage of his development is to injure the innocent. The unconsciousness of the nature of

a deed runs all through human life, beginning with the first efforts of the young child and continually revealing itself in some of the gravest mistakes that are made by statesmen and servants. The important thing for us is to be able to discern when the child has passed out of this first unconscious stage of any deed and has come into the second stage in which he separates this particular experience from all other experiences. Then comes the time when the deed should be allowed, if possible, to bear its own consequences and teach its own lesson. When, however, the child becomes conscious of himself as responsible for the deed, he has reached the third stage, that of rationality, and should be treated as a rational being.

The importance of being able to discern the condition of the *ego* or inner self in our treatment of those around us holds true from the infant's feeblest efforts on up to that supreme insight which, in the midst of physical and mental torture could say, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Yet it was that same Divine insight which caused the Master, with a scourge in His hand, to drive the money-changers from the temple, using no uncertain language as to His condemnation of their conduct.

A kindergarten-trained young mother once said to me: "My nursery is my university. In it I am learning more than I ever learned at college." And I did not wonder at the remark.

XIII

SELF-WILL AN ELEMENT OF CHARACTER

CAROLINE HARDY PATON



REALIZING the vast distance existing between the highest thoughts of a spiritual and wise mind and the lowest possibilities of God, we know that we dare not attempt to train or govern our children, but must, instead, assist them to develop and govern themselves; that instead of guiding their lives into the narrow limits of our own, we are privileged to see them enter into broader and deeper living than we have ever known.

Nowadays many mothers enter theoretically into the spirit of nurture and patient waiting, and would cherish the child's individuality in order that, as a man, he may accomplish his individual work in the world. Few, however, are willing to test its results practically.

As soon as he is able to do so, the child makes known his distinct personality by deciding for himself simple questions which arise concerning his daily life. Very often his decision is not the one reached by the mother, and if baby persists in having his own way he is too often characterized as obstinate and self-willed; and in impatience at what seems to us an uncalled for struggle, we forget that every act of the child is an attempt of the individuality, or God-will, to assert itself. Either with patient firmness or impatient irritability, we gain the mastery; not always because our will is best or right, but be-

Misinterpretations of expressions of individuality

cause we want it our own way and are older and stronger than the child. With inner rebellion and outward concession the baby becomes the puppet of the hour, and by our own hands are sown in him the seeds of will degeneration. He may yield to repeated commands with apparent docility, may ever after render an immediate though half-hearted obedience to the mother's wishes, but much more is lost than is gained.

Our arbitrary ruling is not only unnecessary but injurious, and obedience has been purchased at the cost of rebellion and an awakening sense of injustice. More than that, the force of individuality being refused outlet in a natural way, must of necessity find vent in some other direction; and the child who, under a system of forced obedience, seems most submissive, will undoubtedly, at unwatched moments, run into lawlessness and wrong-doing and will be often driven to subterfuge and deceit. The God-will has been thwarted by our own act, and, by a natural process of deterioration, self-will takes its place. Moreover, we may, perchance, have destroyed in the child the germ of some growth whose ultimate end should be of honor, even though its early promise appeared as little or nothing to our unseeing eyes.

The young mother often longs for complete subjection of the child's will to her own, and, gaining this by arbitrary measures, suggests to us a likeness to the picture which Froebel draws of "the good-natured little boy who, having pulled off his beetle's wings and legs, cries out with joy: 'Just see how tame it is!'" The mother, grown older, wonders with sadness why her boy cannot learn to say no, not realizing, perhaps, that but a few years ago her every effort was bent on destroying in him this very

Story of the
boy and the
beetle

power, and on gaining from him an invariable echo of her own opinion and wish. She realizes that her boy has entered into life maimed and halt and blind; and, tracing effect to cause, finds, for every lack in the man's power, a corresponding lack in the child, produced by her strict adherence in his early life to the principle of the triumph of strength and age.

Freedom of
will necessary
to a sense of
responsibility

What wonder that the man lacks determination and is vacillating and weak, if in babyhood he was invariably obliged to yield to the will of another and so found his determination useless. Would it be strange if obstinacy and stubbornness and violence became the moving factors of life, if the child, by constant struggle against repression, has learned that arbitrary will and brute force are the only means of attaining an end? Whence can come a sense of responsibility in manhood if the child is not allowed freedom of will and action, if he is never required to bear the responsibility and result of his own act? Dare we hope for character in later life (character being based upon a strong self-will) if, through childhood and youth, the human being has been allowed to believe that a reputation built up by yielding to the will of others is all that is desired? And, saddest question of all, how is it possible for the life to be "rounded to circle fair of orb'd completeness," how is it possible for the mission of the life to be accomplished, if the germ of life, in its first unfolding, has been torn and crushed in our irreverent fingers?

By these suggestions we do not mean that the child is to become a law unto himself, but rather that he shall be freed from the self-made laws of other mortals equally fallible with himself, and that he shall be brought instead into harmony with the God-made laws of nature. The laws of human nature may render impossible the development of a perfect

life. The laws of nature are laws of growth and are invariably expedient and just.

Surely the work of the educator is not to gain obedience to his own commands, but is, rather, to establish for life the principle of obedience to just and righteous law; and this can only be done by appealing to a trained mental and moral force, sustained by the cultivated and developed executive power of the mind—the will.

True training
brings us
into harmony
with just law

The wise mother will not attempt to control her child—"to make him mind"—but will teach him to control himself; and to gain this result two lines of work are necessary. The child's will must be awakened and cultivated into vigorous, independent life. Side by side with this, must go on the work of teaching the child to think for himself, and of rousing and strengthening his purest and noblest activities. "The pure, good heart, natural to childhood, and the thoughtful and gentle sympathies, constitute in themselves a unity;" and their utterance will be given in a self-will wholly in harmony with the will of God.

Whoever is caring for the child will find it unwise to express every thought for him in a command. Let what you wish be voiced as a request, thus giving the child freedom of choice; and, though no child should be allowed to say "I won't," every child should be permitted the privilege of a civil refusal. The child who is thus privileged may not invariably yield to the personal wish of the mother. He will, however, form the habit of deciding for himself and doing the right by a conscious act of his own judgment and will.—[*From the "Kindergarten Review," by permission.*]

Requests
rather than
commands

XIV

SELF-ASSERTION IN CHILDREN

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HE present writer recently asked a number of parents and teachers to enumerate the principal faults of children in the home, in the schoolroom and on the playground, which require correction. Other investigators have made similar investigations, and with somewhat the same results. Not long since, a German professor examined much literature, both ancient and modern, on child training, in order to determine the words denoting misdemeanors most frequently used. His research showed that teachers and parents have always had trouble with certain traits of children. Substantially the same causes of conflict are given by German, by English, by French and by American writers.

Prominence
of the ego

Chief among the sources of conflict in home and school is what might be called the *prominence of the ego* in children. In the typical schoolroom, there are from twenty to fifty children. In order that the legitimate work of the school may be carried on, individuals must conform to certain general rules of action. There must be some measure of military order, in which the individual must restrain his particular tendencies if they come into conflict with the rules made for the government of all. If a child refuses to conform to the rules of the school, then conflict will be unavoidable. Inevitably, he will become a source of disturbance to his classmates, and an ir-

ritation to the teacher, because he will, to some extent, neutralize her efforts to make what she is teaching effective in the lives of the pupils.

The pupil in whom the non-conforming disposition is strong, will be constantly asserting himself in opposition to those around him. The instinct of self-assertion is manifested in all young children under favorable conditions, even in the face of power which they know to be far greater than their own. When I exhibit my strength in any way to S., a four-year-old, and tell him what I can do to him, he at once declares, though his declaration has something of the make believe about it, that he could do just as much to me. He could throw me over the moon or do some other terrible thing to me. Children naturally strive to make themselves believe that they are superior to their environment and, of course, they endeavor to impress this upon the people around them. One can hear children, who are much together, talking among themselves as to which one is the strongest, which one can climb the highest, which one can run the fastest, and so on. This, in popular phraseology, is competition, but in reality it is the effort of the individual to become master of his environments. In his imagination he measures himself with his environment, and finds himself greater than it. He can jump over any fence, climb any tree, go out-of-doors in any weather, stay out at night as well as in the daytime, lift any weight, throw a ball or a stone any distance, etc.

The instinct
of self-
assertion

While nature evidently intended that the child should try to make his individuality always prominent, or at least preserve it from effacement or domination by other individuals, still he cannot continue to be a member of the school if he becomes so marked

Docility
necessary
in home and
school

and so differentiated from his classmates that he will have nothing in common with them. A child cannot remain a member of a school unless he can adapt himself to his associates, and unless he recognizes the teacher as a leader. The only purpose of going to school is that he may profit by the instruction and guidance of some one who knows the world and its ways better than he does. He must be in a docile frame of mind toward his guide and leader. He cannot say to the teacher, "I know as much as you do," or "You have no right to tell me what to do," or "If I do not wish to take a part in my work today, it is not for you to coerce me. You have no more authority to order me about than I have to give orders to you." Of course, pupils rarely utter sentiments of this sort, though frequently they entertain them, and they proceed to carry them out so far as they find it safe so to do.

But children
should not be
too rigidly
suppressed

Of course, it will be granted that a pupil should play as independent a part in the life of the home and the school as the welfare of all will permit. The teacher who suppresses all individual initiative, whether or not the moral and intellectual welfare of the school requires it, goes too far in the exercise of his authority; and the same is true in principle in the home. Without doubt, many teachers and parents err on the side of manifesting too great austerity. They demand greater self-restraint of children than is necessary, in order that the life of the school and the home may be carried on in an effective manner. I have in mind a teacher who illustrates this type perfectly. He cannot endure any display of individuality in his classroom. He demands rigid order, and he will not permit free discussion of any point which comes up in recitation. He insists upon

his pupils memorizing the textbook, and reciting it accurately when called upon. He will not tolerate an argument in his class. He tells his pupils that their opinions are not wanted. What is desired of them is to learn what has been assigned them in their lessons. He is a distinguished man in his special field; but he appears to have grown so far beyond his youthful pupils that he can see no worth in their views on any subject, nor any value in their presenting them before their fellows. All those who enter his classes have it impressed upon them that if they want to succeed they must "keep in order" and learn what he gives them. He says he can spend his time in a better way than in listening to the notions of youngsters who "know nothing about the subjects they try to discuss."

Undoubtedly this instructor goes much too far in suppressing the feeling of individual importance in the members of his class. On the other hand, one frequently sees parents and teachers who indulge too greatly the impulse of self-assertiveness in their children. The writer knows a school room which is in serious disorder a large part of the time, principally because five or six boys make themselves so prominent that they distract attention from the legitimate work of the school. It may be that they do not deliberately seek to create a disturbance; but nevertheless, they feel very little, if any, restraint or restriction in the classroom. They oppose their opinions in a more or less offensive way to the views of the teacher. They bring up many irrelevant matters which, if they had a proper attitude toward the work of the school, they would not mention at all. They are almost as independent as they are when they play with their fellows on the street, where individual

The evil of
too prominent
self-assertion

initiative is the essential trait. It would probably be of distinct advantage in this classroom if the teacher would suppress a considerable amount of the self-assertiveness of these five or six boys. They would themselves gain thereby, because they would then be likely to give their attention more fully to matters of serious importance for them. It would be better for the other pupils, too, since their attention would not then be distracted so largely as it now is from the proper work of the room.

It is a delicate matter to determine in how far the self-assertiveness of children should be resisted. Observers from abroad who have been studying educational methods in America the past few years, think our pupils are so prominent individually that they make really effective work in the school impossible. Our critics have pointed out many times during the last decade that discipline should be made more rigid in our homes and schools; children, they say, should be compelled to conform to general rules more completely than they now do. On the other hand, American educators who visit Europe feel that in England and Germany, at any rate, there is now too much repression of individuality, with the result that individuals do not gain the power of initiative and independence which may be found in American homes and schools. It is probable that here, as in most situations, the best course is the middle one. The tendency in America is probably toward permitting too great spontaneity on the part of the individual. However, as between the American and the Old World ideal, we would all probably choose the former.

Self-assertion is a source of trouble in other ways than the one mentioned above. Observe a family of eight persons, say a father and mother and six chil-

Undue self-assertion as a source of conflict

dren, the oldest sixteen and the youngest four years of age. Suppose that this family is conducted on a plan whereby every member may indulge his spontaneity. Study them in their daily adjustments to one another. To take a typical concrete case: The eldest boy is describing some experience which happened to him during the day. He does not go far in his story before his brother of eight or nine breaks in with a view to injecting his individuality into the situation. He may not deliberately intend to attract attention to himself, but this is really his underlying motive in breaking into the discussion. The ego in him is too urgent to be easily restrained. This boy of eight or nine may, in the course of an hour's conversation among the members of the family, interrupt one who is speaking many times unless he is suppressed. He shows in his manner and in the tone of his voice that he desires his view to be accepted, or he wants to have the group understand that his opinion on any point under consideration is of particular importance.

This tendency may be a source of much disturbance in a school in which large freedom is given for individual expression. If the teacher allows free discussion in class, it may be monopolized by the egoists in the school. They may not listen gracefully to the opinions of those of their classmates whose egoistic expressions are not so dynamic. In a group of forty children, eight or ten egoists could easily dominate the whole situation so that the individualities of half the class, at any rate, would be almost completely obscured. Of course, opportunity must be given for the capable pupil to manifest his strength, and he must not be held down to the level of those who are weaker than himself. But at the same time, mere

self-assertiveness on the part of those who really are not true leaders, intellectually or morally, should not be permitted to overpower those who have strength, and who need an opportunity to manifest it in order that it may be developed.

The
domineering
type

Often this self-assertiveness becomes so urgent in some children that they will domineer over their fellows. On the playground they may bully them, and on slight provocation engage them in combat with the expectation that they can overcome them. Probably in nine cases out of ten, fighting on the playground is due to the aggression of egoists. If they do not actually come to blows with some of their fellows who have resisted their aggression, they may hector them or abuse them in one way or another. This is a very prolific source of trouble for the parent and the teacher. This is not the place to discuss the matter in any detail; but it may be opportune to remark that it is probably impossible to prevent a considerable amount of fighting among boys, unless they can be organized in competitive games under rules and regulations which will give vent to self-assertion under legitimate conditions. In the game of life it is permissible for an individual to assert himself in any direction provided he gives others freedom to do the same thing. If he has greater strength, or keener intellect, or greater endurance, or firmer courage than his fellows, then it is right that he should come to the front in these respects. In the same way, pupils may be permitted to express themselves to the full measure of their abilities provided they play fair, and give their fellows an opportunity to express themselves also to the full measure of their abilities.

XV

NURTURING THE INNER LIFE

ELIZABETH HARRISON

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IN former articles* I have tried to show that at first a child merely *absorbs* the activities or emotions of objects and people about him, and instinctively imitates them. Then, that this unconscious imitation, good, bad, or indifferent, arouses dormant instincts and appetites, good, bad, or indifferent, which were inherited from past generations of ancestors. These instincts and appetites thus awakened are the food, so to speak, on which the inner self feeds, and they therefore play their part in the victories and defeats of later life.

Imitation
arouses dor-
mant instinct

Although every child is *self-making*, much of this making of the real inner life necessarily depends on the kind of ethical and spiritual nourishment that is offered it, just as the body building depends on the wholesome or unwholesome food which is consumed by it. And we are beginning to realize the value of a well nourished body in the struggles and battles of life. The analogy is suggestive and profoundly far-reaching, but I will drop it here, as I wish to show some of the simple, practical ways in which even a slight psychological knowledge of children can be of much help to any mother in any station of life.

*The articles of this valuable series can be found in *The Child Welfare Magazine* for 1911-12.

means of
understanding
the world

We at once see the enormous importance of the instinct of imitation. It is the way in which the child begins to get the real meaning of the outside world, and by which he begins to understand what people are doing. In other words, in its deepest significance, *it is the divine within seeking for the Divine in the Universe.*

It is true that physiologically much imitating is "the motor nerves responding to the stimulus given by the sensor nerves"—but why this response, and *what* responds?

To the kindergartener this first explanation is the dim dawning of the real purpose of the inborn love of imitation so strong in all children and foreshadowed in almost all animal life; yet rising higher, infinitely higher, in the child than mere motor response of the nerves.

At first in the tiny infant it is seemingly not much more than the "peep peep" response of the chick to the "cluck" of the mother hen, or the bleat of the young calf to the lowing of the mother cow. But the smile of the young child in response to the smile on the mother's face bending over him means more than mere "response of efferent nerves to afferent nerves."

The baby's
first smile

Froebel's deep insight into the inner nature of man is nowhere shown more clearly than in the passage in which he explains this first smile of infancy. He says, "The first smile originates not only in the physical feeling of his (the infant's) individuality, but in a still higher feeling of community between mother and child; then (later on) with father and brothers and sisters. This feeling of unity first uniting the child with mother, father, brothers and sisters, and resting on a higher spiritual unity with

humanity, with God, this feeling of community is the very first germ, the very first beginning of all true religious spirit, for all genuine yearning for unhindered unification with the Eternal—with God.”

This is the so-called *incomprehensible mysticism* of Froebel. Yet is it mystical? If we believe that man has the power to recognize himself as a child of God, with an infinite immortal spirit within him that can conquer all external conditions, even death itself, must not that realization begin with the beginning of consciousness of the *self* within, of which the body is merely the chief instrument? Therefore is it *mysticism* to claim that, when the love which illumines a mother's smile awakens a smile in response on the child's face, it means more than a motor response to sensor nerves? When and where is the beginning of the *feeling* of pleasure in his mother's presence not included in the gratification of appetite which the nourishment obtained from her breast gives?

Entirely aside from this interpretation of an infant's smile, we all know that a baby will reach out his arms to a swinging ball sooner than to one that is not in motion, will coo in response to the cooing tone of his mother or nurse, will cry when harshly spoken to, will cease his crying when strong, warm arms embrace him and a gentle voice soothes him. All this is, of course, partly physical, but is it not also partly psychical? and is not the inner life being nurtured or mistreated according as the outside stimulus awakens helpful or harmful instincts or emotions?

I have seen a nursery maid force a six months baby into his baby carriage and tuck the carriage blanket so closely around him that his legs and arms

Stimulus of
helpful or
harmful
instincts

could not assist in expressing the awakened wrath and indignation within him, until his face grew purple and his eyes had an expression of murder in them. I moved to one side so as to see the face of the nurse. It was angry and flushed also.

Again I have seen the same preparation for the home going made so lovingly and gently, with bright, cheery words which the baby could not understand, but the tones of which awakened the corresponding mood within him, until he crowed with delight as the blanket was tucked around him.

Absorbing
moods of
caretaker

In each case the child was unconsciously *absorbing* the mood of the older person, and this absorbing of mental conditions comes before the actual imitating of physical activities. It thus indicates the importance of selecting the right person to take care of early infancy. It is not enough to hire a trained nurse to care for the child; she must have a true mother heart also if the inner life of feelings, instinct, impulses, and emotions are to be guarded and developed as well as the body. They are dim and helpless, but they are there, and many a child has been made wilful and selfish by the mistreatment of them. In early infancy the tone of a voice may jar or soothe this tender inner self fully as much as rough or gentle handling can arouse physical pain or pleasure.

As the child grows older this instinctive absorbing of the moods of people around him soon develops into the imitating of their gestures and tones. This in turn very soon passes into the effort to imitate the activities of those around. We have all laughed over the nine or ten months' old baby's imitation of his mother's delight when, having achieved the tremendous feat of letting go of the chair and stand-

ing alone, he has thrown up his hands in mimic astonishment and uttered an exclamation of joy before he tumbled over. I have seen a year-old child take a dust cloth and, after rubbing it along the surface of a chair or stool, shake it vigorously in exact imitation of his energetic mother. Who has not seen the little two-year-old girl stir up imaginary cake, or sip imaginary tea out of her toy cup? She is not merely imitating tea drinking; she is absorbing the social mood of the tea drinker. The boy of the same enchanting age spreads out a newspaper and pretends to be absorbed in its contents. He is imitating the preoccupied mood of his father as well as his newspaper reading. Their young minds are more responsive than the most sensitive photographic films. Yet each impression made is awakening and feeding some instinct, or impulse, or desire, which is helping to make or mar the serene inner life which ought to be the heritage of every child.

I do not mean by this that every word and deed should be guarded when in the presence of a child, but I want to emphasize the importance of keeping children in surroundings that are wholesome, and with people who are sympathetic without being weak or sentimental. In other words, the child absorbs the "spiritual atmosphere" of the home, and is fully as much affected by it as his body is affected by the fresh air of his physical environment. He absorbs the one as surely as he breathes in the other. This is one reason why it is so vital a matter that what we call "the spirit of the kindergarten" should be right. In the light of this psychological insight, what shall I say about homes in which the child is permitted to hear the jars and jangles that sometimes come between parents, or between mistress and servant?

**Importance of
spiritual
atmosphere in
the home**

Blows upon the child's tender flesh are less mar-ring. In time bruised flesh will heal. But who shall say when will be wiped out the effects of evil emotions such as suspicion, jealousy, rage, when once aroused? They not only poison the blood, but they poison the impulses which should reach out from the inmost depths of a child's being toward fellowship with and love of all mankind. It were better to hang a millstone around one's neck and be cast into the sea than to cause one of these little ones to offend thus.

XVI

HOW WE HAMPER THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUALITY

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PARENTS usually recognize individuality in children to the extent of knowing that no two are alike, yet this same individuality is too often treated from the mere parental standpoint. Not until a parent can look at things from the child's standpoint, do reason, skill and good results become prominent in the care of the child. Apparently the first impulse of the parent is to say "no" on general principles; and the probabilities are that we really *need* say "no" only about one time in ten. It seems that nothing short of a revolution will enable us to see the error which we practice and perpetuate in this direction. It is a natural instinct of all children to imitate; they do this unconsciously, and if it were not for constant repression, would do so spontaneously.

Parents should *play* more freely with their children, for it would cultivate a loving and sympathetic appreciation of the child's thought world. Children have a keener appreciation of this sympathetic interest in their games than they have of parental sympathy in sickness. Try to put yourself in the child's place; make some effort to remember how you felt when you were young, or what you have

Parental
preferences
not adequate
guides

Parents
should play
with children

learned by observation of other children, not forgetting, however, that new environments create new desires and that just what your childhood plays were, may or may not be suited to the children of this generation; at any rate, it is better to find out the true condition before censuring the child too severely or telling him that he "doesn't know how to play." Every child has a right to his childhood and a large part of this is play, imitative, representative, or creative play; but above and beyond all, whatever the *kind*, let it be spontaneous, childlike play; let it be as free from parental interference and repression as the limits of safety will permit.

From a false notion of dignity and an idea that play is foolish, adults deprive themselves of a vast amount of inexpensive vitalizing exercise in the opportunity afforded by a romp and play with the children. Yet these same people, recognizing the need of physical exercise, will circumspectly ride to the club, don a gymnasium suit, and mechanically perform various feats with dumbbells, bars, ropes and clubs in the delusive pursuit of physical culture.

In their free, spontaneous play, children live in an ideal world of their own creation, and it is invariably of the present. If in this very vivid child world a feather is to him a bird, and for the time a bird that can build a nest, rear its young and fill the air with sweet music, what right have we to intrude our presence and disturb the chain of thought by telling him it is not a bird, that it cannot build, it cannot sing, that it is only a small and very unimportant part of a bird which he has; and then, Grad-grind like, show our superior wisdom (?) with this advice: "You would better be spending your time in learning something. Why don't you take your book and study?"

Play an ideal
world and an
education

For an example of true poetical expression watch children in their spontaneous play. How deftly and gracefully the girl shapes and trims that sand pie and then holds it aloft for final inspection! And thrice blessed is that individual who is considered worthy to partake of such a pie in the same spirit with which it was made! That sturdy little fellow digging an imaginary well or driving a span of spirited "stick horses," exhibits all those muscular qualities that are possessed by expert horsemen.

A boy making his first kite and a girl struggling with the intricacies of hem and seam, collar and band, of her first doll's dress, are learning measurement, strength of material, adaptability of means to end, far more nicely than they would if they were not "playing." To be sure, the finished product is crude, but it is in accordance with the child's individuality and is better suited to him than a more perfect one made by another. This crude material in the hands of a child is just what he needs; in it there is room for the widest possible range of the imagination.

What do we do when we take sticks, paper, strings and glue from the boy and make for him a beautiful kite? or from the little girl the material she has and return to her a well-made dress? We simply deprive the children of the exercise of those faculties which are called into action in discovery and invention when *we* assume the planning and constructing for them. We do not permit the child to be himself; and in so far as he is not himself is he thwarted and robbed of that peculiar power which is his individuality. It may be said, and with some truth, that as children waste so much material in these crude efforts to make, and finally are not satisfied with

Error in doing
things for
children

results, it is "easier" to do the work for them. Yes, it is easier, but for whom? What comparison is there between a little *wasted* material, as you call it, and a gain in power? It is in just such instances as this that parental patience is lacking.

Individuality
of slow
growth

This individuality is a growth, and where parent, teacher or companion does the work which should be done by the growing individual, we have a product which closely resembles a hothouse plant forced into maturity by artificial heat. Every age of life has its own peculiar claims and needs; what is lost in childhood cannot very well be acquired in later life. As it is in the life of a plant, it is infinitely more so in the life of a child; no true development can be forced. We may forcibly open the rose and find the finely folded leaves but they will not unfold; development ceases with our interference. Perhaps you have seen a tissue paper flower tied to the stalk of a young thrifty plant? At sufficient distance from the plant to deceive you as to its genuineness, it looked *natural*. We too often treat children in just this way—as if it were possible for them to grow by tacking on patches of what we are, instead of recognizing the truth that each life must be an unfolding and developing of the heart leaves of the individual. We are so slow to learn that it is not what we do for the child but what we help him to do for himself that is of value to him; that it is not what he *has* but what he *is* that stamps his individuality.

Let every child play and plan and work; let every child learn by doing, not by having things done for him, for in no other way will he so clearly and surely find his spiritual and moral center of gravity. Oh! for more faith to wait for these powers of childhood

to evolve and ripen, for more parental patience to keep our "hands off" during this mysterious process of individual development!

Do you know a child who does not like to dig in the earth, if not for the purpose of making a garden, a well, or a cave, then for the mere pleasure of digging—a sense of power over material things? How many children have a spot in which to dig undisturbed and untrammelled by a multitude of restrictions? Some one, alas! too often intrudes personal objections. How that looks! What *are* you doing in that dirt. *Look* at your hands! To all of which the little innocent answers either by word or manner, "Well, what of it? I like to dig. It's nice."

Children like to play in and with water, but no, the girls have been dressed in swiss, the boys are painstaking reproductions of theatrical Lord Fauntleroy's because they "look so cute," and their clothes will be spoiled if they play in the water; not even a pail or tub full can they have, to say nothing of a genuine pond or brook in which to wade or sail imaginary boats.

Dress as a
hindrance

Children like to roll over and over in the grass, to run and frisk like so many sportive lambkins, in fact it is a positive pain to them to be quiet. I have seen some dear little ones look wistfully at the grass, then at their dresses and say, "I can't play in the grass for fear I will stain my dress." If in a moment of strong temptation they forget about the stained dress, they are frequently treated to "Oh! I wouldn't do that! What do you suppose people will think of you?" It is no small wonder children are so frequently prematurely self-conscious, always made to think some one is watching for the sole purpose of criticising them. Under such treatment is it

fair to look for any other result? Who is responsible for it? I saw such an unmistakable instance of this kind at one of the parks last summer.

There were three or four little girls in one company. To say their dresses were "marvels of style" is putting it mildly; embroidery, tucks, ruffles and laces galore. It was positively painful to watch those little ones attempt to sit on the grass, and still more so to watch the expression on the faces of their mothers, for such I suppose they were, whenever one of the children thought it would be nice to have a good run down hill. I almost wished that I might see those anxious looking mothers go to sleep that I might take the children for a frolic.

Unreasonable
interference
incites to
rebellion

It is this *unreasonable* interference and repression of childish pleasures that incites rebellion or teaches deception. A large part of the friction in home and social life is due to somebody's over-management; some one with a strong will—poorly controlled—believing her way the best, thinking she knows all about it and that the younger and weaker members of society must be subject to her dictates. In such an individual, the spiritual qualities are too frequently sacrificed to the physical. Can you imagine a child enjoying spontaneous play under such an individual? We claim to please the children, but we really do those things which please ourselves; if this is not so, why is it so apparent in the arrangement and disposition of the home? It would certainly seem that more care is taken to win the approval of an occasional guest than to provide pleasure for the ones who constitute the home.

Frances Hodgson Burnett says: One generation, one entire generation of all the world of children *understood* as they *should* be, *loved* as they *ask* to

be, and so *developed* as they *might* be, would more than begin the millenium.

Professor Eliot of Harvard, in speaking of the advantages to the modern student from the elective courses said that they are the result of an effort toward individuality; that formerly, if a student were lacking in mathematical ability it was inferred that a diet of mathematics was the proper thing, seemingly unmindful of the possibility of spoiling a good historian in the attempt to make a poor mathematician.

I feel quite sure the following examples of parental repression of individuality are not exceptional.

In a family of girls, one wished very much for a yard of calico and some old kid gloves to be used in making a dress and pair of shoes for her doll; another wanted a hobby horse; and still another longed for a pet dog. There was no *reason* why these wishes should not be gratified except that their cost did not represent enough value to make a present. The father of these little girls was wealthy and in place of the old gloves, hobby horse and pet dog, he surprised them with a beautiful toy theatre having shifting scenes and magnificently attired dummy actors. Why? Because, forsooth, their father's favorite author had been delighted with a similar toy when he (the author) was a child. In this case whose was the pleasure? Whose individuality was represented?

A parent, wise and loving in his way, purchased a cart and pony for his son. The lad rode in it a few times but much preferred to be with a neighbor boy whose parents had given him a scroll saw and work bench in the attic. This "wise" parent called the son ungrateful because he did not care to ride after the present was given to him.

In another family—a musical one—a little girl very early showed a decided dislike for *music*, but developed a strong inclination for drawing. Her parents entirely ignore the fact that she is happy with a box of water colors and a Kate Greenaway painting book, and think it is their duty to have her taught music, believing that she can be “made to learn.” These are some of the ways that children are pleased and their minds and bodies developed.

Individual
freedom
necessary to
the true home

It is not wise to give a child too much option in the selection of its plays, studies, companions, attire, etc., nor is it wise to withhold the benefit to be gained by allowing all possible liberties consistent with reason. We cannot expect to have homes under monarchical government. Individuality in the home is only possible when each member has a voice in the making of the home. Our opportunities are great; we have only to open the windows of the mind and let in the thoughts, to live up to our possibilities.

XVII

JUSTICE

JOHN LOCKE

From "Thoughts Concerning Education"



F liberty ought to be encouraged, certainly great care is to be taken that children transgress not the rules of justice. And whenever they do, they should be set right, and if there be occasions for it, severely rebuked.

Our first actions being guided more by self love than reason or reflection, 'tis no wonder that in children they should be very apt to deviate from the just measures of right and wrong, which are in the mind the result of improved reason and serious meditation. This the more they are apt to mistake, the more careful guard ought to be kept over them; and the least slip in this great social virtue taken notice of and rectified; and that in things of the least weight and moment, both to instruct their ignorance and prevent ill habits; which from small beginnings in pins and cherry stones, will, if let alone, grow up to higher frauds, and be in danger to end at last in downright hardened dishonesty. The first tendency to any injustice that appears must be suppressed with a show of wonder and abhorrence in the parents and governors.

Self-love our
first guide

But because children cannot well comprehend what injustice is, till they understand property, and how particular persons come by it, the safest way to secure honesty, is to lay the foundations of it

Honesty
due to a
sense of
justice

early in liberality and an easiness to part with to others whatever they have or like themselves. This may be taught them early, before they have language and understanding enough to form distinct notions of property, and to know what is theirs by a peculiar right exclusive of others. And since children seldom have anything but by gift, and that for the most part from their parents, they may be at first taught not to take or keep anything but what is given them by those whom they take to have power over it. And as their capacities enlarge, other rules and cases of justice, and rights concerning meum and tuum may be proposed and inculcated.

Method of
dealing with
injustice

If any act of injustice in them appears to proceed, not from mistake but a perverseness in their wills, when a gentle rebuke and shame will not reform this irregular and covetous inclination, rougher remedies must be applied. And 'tis but for the father or tutor to take and keep from them something that they value and think their own, or order somebody else to do it; and by such instances, make them sensible what little advantages they are like to make by possessing themselves unjustly of what is another's, whilst there are in the world stronger and more men than they. But if an ingenuous detestation of this shameful vice be but carefully and early instilled into them, as I think it may, that is the true and genuine method to obviate this crime, and will be a better guard against dishonesty than any considerations drawn from interest; habits working more constantly, and with greater facility than reason which, when we have most need of it, is seldom fairly consulted and more rarely obeyed.

XVIII

CHILDREN'S CRUEL ACTIONS

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RECENTLY two boys were observed playing with a number of dogs on the ice. It was a cold day. Some workmen had been harvesting ice, and had left a large area with a thin surface. A little snow had fallen, so that it was not easy to tell where the new was separated from the old ice. The boys' game with the dogs consisted in enticing them upon the thin ice, so that they would break in. When a dog fell in, it would, of course, try desperately to get out, because the water was extremely cold. In several cases that were observed, the dogs would try to crawl out upon the thin ice, which, of course, would break under their weight; and it would be several minutes before they could actually escape from the water. Meanwhile the boys were shouting with savage glee as they noted the struggles of each dog endeavoring to get out of a painful situation. This "game" was continued until it was put an end to by an adult who was looking on, and who could not endure the "sport" any longer.

Nine out of ten mature people would say that these boys were cruel. They were apparently inflicting pain upon helpless creatures, and they were enjoying the expressions of distress. At least so it

When is an
act cruel?

appeared to one viewing the matter from the outside. But let us look into the consciousness of these boys, and note what they were enjoying, and so what was the real motive at the bottom of their actions. An adult will be helped in making the analysis if he will analyze his own consciousness when he catches a fish, say. The writer has asked a good many men to make this analysis for him. A few of those who have reported have said that they do not enjoy fishing, because when they are successful they are greatly distressed by the evidence of pain experienced by the fish when it is caught either by a hook or in a net, and allowed to perish out of water. In such a case, the dominant thing in the fisherman's consciousness is the feeling of pain experienced by the dying fish. The fisherman projects his own feelings into the fish, and so suffers with it. This is why he cannot enjoy the "sport." No normal human being can enjoy any action which is accompanied by pain to himself or to anything else, provided he is conscious of the pain, even if it does not really exist. It exists for him, and that is sufficient to influence his attitude.

But most of the adults who have responded to the inquiry mentioned above enjoy fishing. The writer has been a good deal in the Rocky Mountains, and has come across many men whose chief delight seems to be to fish for trout in the mountain streams. They say that it is magnificent "sport," because mountain trout are so "gamey." These fishermen apparently never have the slightest consciousness of the suffering of the fish which they catch. They simply regard the whole matter as a contest, and their supreme ambition is to win. They like especially to fish for mountain trout, because in order to be successful they must be alert, agile, and resourceful. The

The
difference
between
"sport" and
cruelty

element of pain plays no part at all in the process so far as the angler is concerned, though an outsider might be conscious only of the pain inflicted upon the fish. He might see nothing meritorious in the "sport," and so it would seem to him simply a cruel, brutal business. Thus it all depends upon the point of view of the individual whether an action is cruel, or whether it is entirely legitimate. Among fishermen it is considered to be an evidence of ability for a man to be successful in fishing. Anglers usually delight in describing their experience with a fish which has struggled long to save its life. In such a case a man evidently has no consciousness that he is actually taking a life. He is simply thinking of his own wit, his endurance, and his ingenuity in finally capturing his victim.

Again, the writer has talked with many men who enjoy hunting. Some of these men come in from a day's shooting, bringing with them two or three ducks, or half a dozen rabbits, or a dozen quail, perhaps. These hunters seem never to have given a thought to the pain created by their bullets or knives, though they know they have destroyed the life of various creatures. The larger their killing the more pleasure they derive from the "sport." Evidently their consciousness is dominated by the idea of success. They look upon the creatures of the forest as objects for testing their own ability in woodcraft, and especially their skill with the rifle. The writer has observed huntsmen spread out a dozen bleeding ducks before admiring comrades, every one of the men showing in his face and in all his expressions that it was impossible for him to entertain any idea of pain in respect to these creatures. If in any one case the

notion of pain and destruction of life got into the focus of consciousness, it would probably prevent him from practicing the "game."

Cruelty
versus
a contest
of wits or
muscle or
courage

Still again, the writer has observed crowds of highly developed and apparently "refined" men and women observing a football game. In many of these contests, blood flows freely; and in some cases the players are seriously injured. They are always taking chances; and in every vigorous intercollegiate game there is more or less pain experienced by some of the players. But the onlookers are utterly indifferent to this. They see only the manifestation of muscle, agility and courage. These characteristics so dominate their minds that the idea of pain cannot gain an entrance. Frequently some highly sensitive person complains about the cruelty of football, which is kept up simply because so-called "refined" people enjoy it; but these latter people never can appreciate a criticism of this kind. When told they are encouraging cruelty they are utterly unable to appreciate the point, because they are not aware that there is any cruelty in the game.

It is much the same with the bull fights in Mexico. The most "intelligent" and "refined" people in that country take great delight in observing several bulls, a number of horses, and even one or two men killed at a single exhibition. To the writer this seems to be barbarous cruelty; but he has never found a Mexican who has appreciated this view of the matter. The latter thinks constantly of the skill and daring exhibited by the toreador; and when a bull is stabbed, the Mexican is conscious only of the skill of the one who has accomplished it, and there is shut out of his mind absolutely all pain brought upon the animal.

Now let us return to the boys who pushed the dogs into the freezing water. In their consciousness they seemed to be utterly oblivious to the pain experienced by their victims. They were so completely absorbed in the reaction of the dogs that nothing else could get their attention. This presented to the boys an unusual situation, and their sole interest in the matter was to see what would happen,—to observe how each dog would struggle, and whether he would actually succeed in getting out of the water. And then when he did escape, and the water froze in icicles on his body, the boys were only conscious of his peculiar appearance, and there was no room for any thought of pain. They were not projecting their own feelings into the dogs, and so they could not realize their distress. It is a case of being obsessed by certain ideas so that others which should make an impression cannot get into the focus of consciousness.

The adult looking on had heretofore observed reactions of this kind in living creatures, so that they were really not novel for him. He was not greatly interested in noting how the dogs would escape from their perilous situation. But in the course of his development the idea of pain had become more and more prominent. The notion of saving living things from disagreeable experiences had become ever more dominant in his life. As a child his chief delight was in securing all sorts of reactions from objects, especially from living things. But now that he is mature his chief interest is in increasing the pleasures and diminishing the pains of beings that may be made comfortable or the opposite. There has been a complete change in his consciousness in the course of his development, so that as he looks on at this "game" he attends primarily to the sufferings of

Cruelty
implies an
appreciation
of the pain
inflicted
upon one's
victim

the dogs rather than to their efforts to save themselves, except as the latter are evidences of their distress. Inevitably, then, he calls the boys cruel, when in their own feelings they are no more cruel than the fisherman, the huntsman, or the spectator who witnesses a bull fight.

Why the
young appear
to be cruel

The instance cited is typical in all essentials of activities which are occurring constantly in any group of boys. If they have cats, dogs, colts, pigs, chickens, squirrels, or other living things from which they can get reactions by stimulating them in unusual ways, they will, speaking from the adult's standpoint, be treating them cruelly much of the time, in the sense that they will be causing pain in order that they may get them into difficult situations to observe how they are going to get out of them. If there are no animals of any sort to experiment upon, then children will try their "tricks" on one another, usually on the weakest one in the group, or on one who is "peculiar." Take two brothers, say seven and nine, who have a younger sister. They will be likely to tease, irritate, and annoy her to some extent, unless they are restrained by authority, or unless they are kept occupied in other ways. Normally they seem to gain pleasure in frightening the child, in hiding her toys, or in running away from her when she does not want to be left alone; or they may inflict pain upon her dolls, by hanging them by the neck out of the window, or breaking down her playhouse; or they may do one of a hundred different things which will secure violent reactions from her. The parent regards these acts cruel, but the boys themselves simply regard them as "fun," because they have been able to arouse a peculiar reaction on the part of the child.

Unquestionably children bring with them into this world a tendency to annoy, hector, and bully their rivals and even members of their own group. This instinct seems to find gratification in the discomfort of others, who may be regarded as competitors for favors of some sort. Bullying goes on principally among those who come into conflict with one another for some reason or other. In cases of competition and rivalry, the more one can irritate and annoy those who are his rivals, the greater are the chances that the aggressor will win out in his competition.

The instinct
to hector
one's com-
petitors

Oftentimes a boy who is given to bullying will protest when he looks on at a case of bullying practiced by somebody else. If one of the three boys referred to had been standing on the bank with the adult, and viewing the situation as an outsider, he would be likely to resent the actions of the others. Not being in the game, his sympathetic feelings might come to the front. This would have been particularly true if one of the dogs had been his own pet. Then the creature would seem near to him, indeed a part of himself, and he could, therefore, more readily project his own feelings into him. It is, of course, a very complicated problem to determine what phase of any situation will become dominant in the consciousness of those who are participating in a game, but it is safe to say that in all cases like the one cited in the beginning, a child will not be conscious of any painful experiences unless the creatures suffering are closely related to him.

There is another phase of the matter which should be mentioned. And it may be introduced by describing a concrete instance of cruelty so called. Two boys had a dog hitched to a cart, and were driving it through the street. They were doing this for the

The instinct
to dominate
one's
associates

“fun of it” solely. Whenever the dog showed any tendency to stop or to turn out of the middle of the street, the boys would strike him with a whip, and several times he cried out from pain. A number of adults passing on the street called to the boys to cease the punishment of the dog, but they would soon forget the warnings given them; and they continued the punishment until they were physically restrained by an adult who had followed them, observing what they were doing. When asked why they should make the dog suffer, their only response was that they wanted him to “mind.” And he was their own dog anyway, and they “had a right” to do what they wished to him.

What could have been uppermost in the minds of these boys? Before answering this question we might attempt to answer another. Why will an adult often whip his horse when the latter is doing the best he can? Why will an intoxicated man, as a rule perhaps, whip his horse, if he is driving one, or whip his children upon coming into the house, or express his power over any living thing around him? Why will the leader of a group whip one of his subjects if they will not submit to his will? It is evident that in all of these cases the desire for control plays a leading part. Instinctively men wish to show authority over the creatures around them, and even over their own associates. Instinctively they wish to reduce them to submission. So whipping a dog, a horse or even a child, which manifests any tendency to follow its own desire, is largely instinctive. In a case of this sort, the aggressor is not keenly conscious of the pain inflicted upon his victims. He is simply dominated by the impulse to make the thing upon which he is expressing his power obey his will. One

may often observe children whip their dolls, or their soldiers, or their rocking-horse; and as they talk to them they indicate their fundamental attitude,—“I’ll teach you to mind me,” “I’ll show you that I am boss over you,” and so on *ad libitum*.

What can we do to develop in children a consciousness of the pain which they inflict in cases of so-called cruelty? In the first place, we must so far as possible suggest activities to the young which will require the co-operation of their fellows and the creatures with which they have relations. Take, for example, the case of a boy who plagues his dog, or even beats it in gratification of the instinct to show authority over it. Now, if the boy could be led to play a game in which the dog would take a part, then the latter would become a partner in an interesting affair, rather than a mere slave to be kept in subjection. There are dozens of games which boys can play with dogs so that all will have a good time. The running and jumping games, throwing objects for the dog to catch, and so on illustrate the principles.

Then in the second place, the child must be led to appreciate that living things have feelings like his own. He does not come to this view very readily, but a skillful teacher or parent can easily make him see the expressions of pain in the creatures he abuses and these signs of distress may be made to occupy a prominent place in the attention so that they will restrain cruel actions. In the last resort it might prove genuinely wholesome if a boy who hectored one of his companions should be hectored in the same way by some one stronger than himself. Or take a case where one boy puts a pin upon a seat for another to sit on, merely “for the fun of it.” Let him have a similar experience himself. Of course, this is a

The training
of children
who are cruel

very harsh method of treatment; but oftentimes it is the only way one can make some children realize that their acts are the cause of suffering in others. When discipline of this sort is administered, it should not be accompanied by anger on the part of the parent or teacher. The teacher should say to an offender—"You struck this small boy with a snowball. Now we will strike you in the same way, and you tell us what your feelings are." In some such manner, children who inflict pain upon others, unconscious of what they are doing, must be brought to their senses in regard to it, not in a purely arbitrary way, but by being made to experience the sort of thing which they are practicing on others.

XIX

FAVORITES AMONG CHILDREN

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HE chief thing for any parent to appreciate is that his children must have companions. The profoundest need in child nature is social intercourse. The child seems to bring with him from afar into this world an absorbing desire to associate with people. During the early months of life he is content simply to be in the *presence* of persons, in much the same way that a dog or a kitten finds pleasure in being near people. There is undoubtedly a more or less definite feeling of protection and welfare which the child, as well as the dog and the kitten, feel when they are in close contact with human beings.

But it is not long before the child passes the stage when he desires social contact for mere protection. After the first year, at any rate, the pleasure he derives from association with persons is due mainly to the fact that they furnish him an opportunity to express himself in many more ways than would otherwise be possible. A two-year-old child gains pleasure from the use of a hammer or a ball, or a balloon; but he gains more pleasure from his rocking-horse, say, or his sand pile, because he can do more things with it than he can with either the hammer or the balloon. He gains more pleasure still from his dog,

The earliest
basis for
sociability

since the latter will *react to his expressions*, and give him opportunity for a much wider range of actions. But he derives his greatest pleasure from his associations with his mother, father, brothers, sisters and playmates, because they furnish him a still wider range for action. In addition they can serve him more completely than can his toys or his pets, in enabling him to secure the objects in which he is interested, or to perform the activities which he lacks strength or skill to perform himself.

It must be apparent that a prominent basis for the child's sociable attitude is his craving for opportunity to express himself. Any object or situation which will encourage his spontaneous expression in a variety of ways will surely awaken his interest and claim his devotion. On the other hand, any object or situation which will prevent his expression will be likely to arouse his anger or his hatred. And not only does he crave opportunities to express himself spontaneously, but he also needs models who will suggest to him new directions in which his activities may occur. On his own initiative he will discover many ways for the agreeable expenditure of his energy; but he is always eager to learn new modes of expression. Every normal human being seeks constantly to enlarge the range of his achievements in action. If he did not possess this desire, he would not make much progress. The essential requisite for continual advancement is that there must be a longing to achieve new activities. This is at the bottom of all experimentation, investigation and research. It is the motive for the learning of all new arts and games. Through this impulse, man has mastered his environments in an ever-enlarging degree, and has surrounded himself with objects of interest and of

service. Civilization is simply the result of this absorbing passion of all progressive people,—to increase the ways in which their energies may be expressed. And this impulse is unquestionably transmitted to the young.

This effort of the child to enlarge his sphere of action—constantly to learn new actions and processes—determines his choice of companions. The infant shows but slight inclination to discriminate between his associates; but before the close of the first year he manifests a desire to be with certain of the persons in his environment rather than with others. Even the dog and the kitten have their favorites among the members of a family. The year-old child is apt to show clearly that he would rather be with his father than with his mother, or *vice versa*. He is likely to choose his sister rather than his brother, or the other way around. As he develops, this discrimination between persons becomes ever more marked. The five-year-old boy is very decided in his choice of associates; and the one quality more than any other which he demands in a companion is that he should be resourceful in “doing things.” The favorite with every normal boy is the one who knows how to lead in the accomplishment of new games or tricks, or who is daring in undertaking adventures; or in general, the one who can do better than others what the boy wishes to do himself.

Among boys from seven or eight up to eighteen or twenty, intellectual superiority as measured by school work is not rated high as a quality in the choice of a companion. The boy who has the highest marks in school is generally not a favorite on the playground, unless at the same time he has courage, skill, and ingenuity in the games he plays. For a boy to be ex-

The choice
of companions

Intellectual
superiority
as a basis
for com-
panionship

cellent in books is no recommendation to his fellows for comradeship. Nor does the typical group of boys regard moral excellence in one of their number as a quality of much consequence. The boy who stands first in the school or in deportment is often marked lowest in good-fellowship by his "set," because he is likely to be restrained, static, and without ability as a leader. Ordinarily the qualities which count for the most in many a home and schoolroom count for the least in the rather rough, dramatic, and dynamic life of the playground or of the street.

It is not much different with young girls. They too wish as companions those who can "do things." But, of course, they are not as crude and muscular in their interests as boys, so that they can the more readily appreciate characteristics which lead to excellence in studies and in conduct. A boy rather scorns a "well-behaved" fellow of his own age; but this is not usually the case with the girl. Often in groups of girls from nine or ten years on, the one who stands highest in the school is the leader of her "set"; but very rarely is this the case with the boy.

The boy's
interests
during the
teens

The boy enters the teens possessing a profound interest in a dynamic life. His favorites are the boys who are best in athletics, or most courageous and expert in the preying activities of the gang. The leader is generally the one who is strongest and keenest in the activities of the group, not the one who can speak most grammatically or who is fond of algebra and foreign languages.

Wealth in
relation to
the choice of
companions

Wealth does not count for much in determining companionship among young boys. Indeed, a boy of wealth may be handicapped in gaining companions, because possession of money may make him restrained and presuming, which the typical boy group

cannot endure. Dress plays little if any part in the companionship of boys until they are past the teens. The social status of parents does not count for much. As a matter of fact, boys would obliterate all class distinctions if they could have their way, and they would establish a social system based on superiority in muscular and heroic qualities. The indifference of the typical boy up to seventeen or eighteen to the ordinary social stratifications in his community is shown in his readiness to choose a colored boy as a companion, if the latter excels in athletics or in some other concrete and interesting activity. If he be clever at making interesting things, as a boat, for instance, or in playing the guitar, or in singing familiar songs, he is likely to become a favorite with the boys.

But when girls come to the teens, the social lines drawn by their parents begin to make cleavages among them. The conventions of society press down upon the girl much more than they do upon the boy. Early in the teens dress becomes an important factor in determining her comradeships. The boy ignores all outward evidences of social status, but society forces these things upon the girl's attention. One can see groupings of girls in the eighth grade, say, or in the high school, formed on the basis of the social casts of their parents when no such groupings may exist among the boys of the same families.

But when it comes to the girls' choosing favorites among the boys, those who excel in athletics, who are most dynamic, will usually be chosen in preference to those who are deficient in athletic and muscular activities, but who may excel in books and good behavior. The dynamic boy more than the other type always appeals to the girl; but this is not the case

The influence of social stratification upon the sociability of girls

A girl's boy, and a boy's girl

when taken the other way around. The boy chooses his girl friends on the basis of appearance, of "style," of "looks," rather than for their achievements in intellectual and muscular pursuits. Intellectual superiority, or even good conduct in the girl does not make a strong appeal to the typical boy. If given his way, he will leave a girl in his own social set for one in a lower social stratum who is more "classy" in the matter of appearance, or more captivating in manner.

Physical attractiveness, however, plays no part whatever in the relations of boys and girls before they enter the teens. Until the beginning of adolescence, the sole basis for comradeship between boys and girls is ability to play a part—to accomplish things. With young boys, a girl is a favorite if she can run fast, or pitch a straight ball, or take her part in any of the games or activities in which the boy is interested; but it is altogether different after the age of fifteen.

Secret
societies
and clubs

At the advent of the teens, the desire for close companionship with favorites leads to the organization of special groups, and is the motive for the development of the secret societies in the seventh and eighth grades and in the high school. Occasionally one finds clubs of boys or girls eight or nine years of age, but the members are always very loosely tied to one another, and the clubs break up on the slightest pretext. It is different, though, after fourteen or fifteen. As life interests become more complex and intimate, there is a longing for confidential relations, and this means restricted associations. The sort of relations which children from two to eleven or twelve have with one another do not require any confidential relations; but a change takes place be-

fore the age of fifteen. It is inevitable that there should be groups in the high school. At any rate, it is impossible to preserve complete democracy. But it is undoubtedly better for the school as a whole to prevent the development of the typical high school fraternities and sororities. However, every opportunity ought to be given for grouping along literary, musical and even social lines. But when high school groups are bound together by secret ties, they are apt to carry their exclusive tendencies too far, so that they may lose contact with the larger life of the school.

When it comes to the child's choice of favorites among adults, it is apparent that he is governed by the same motives that govern him in the choice of favorites among his fellows. What the child wants in the adult is companionship, not advice. And companionship means give-and-take relations. Companionship is impossible between two people when one individual feels himself above or beneath the other, so that he must be either austere and autocratic, or humble and subservient in his attitudes. When the child is overawed by an adult, he cannot find pleasure in his presence, and so he will not choose him as a favorite. The parent or teacher who wins the good will of children is he who can be one with them, who can enter into their games, and play his part like any other member of the group, so that all may feel perfectly free to express themselves according to their interests and their capacities. But when the parent or teacher comes into a group, and sets up inhibitions and restraints in its members, he cannot be regarded as a favorite. On the contrary, he will be avoided by the group whenever possible.

Adult
favorites
with children

The natural leader of the young is the one who can do many things in such a way as to interest children, and so to set models for them to imitate. It is hardly necessary to say that the great scholar or great moralist is never a favorite with children on the basis simply of his intellect or his conduct. Ordinarily a minister is not a favorite with the young of any age, because he is apt to suggest too great restraint, which is always displeasing to the young. Sometimes an adult tries to make himself agreeable to children, but they may instantly recognize that he is doing it for a purpose, and is not genuine in it. The result is that he is not acceptable as an associate. He tends to break up the group solidarity, and so is regarded as an "outsider."

The parent
must not
appear to be
an "outsider"

The one essential for a parent, if he wishes to be a leader among his children in their spontaneous life, is that he shall cultivate qualities which will not make him appear as an "outsider." No person who is not felt to be a real member of a group, at least for the time being, and to have a genuine interest in its activities, and some ability to take part in them, can win the confidence of the group, or have much influence with it.

It will be granted by every teacher, of course, that for the best influence in the school room, it is highly desirable that a teacher should be a genuine leader in the group life outside of school. At the same time, it should be recognized that he must be able to lead in the class-room as well as on the playground. When the pupils get inside the class-room, they must feel that what is required of them now is strict attention to the legitimate work of the school-room; and this is not at all like that which is appropriate on the street or on the playground. There

must be restraints in the class-room. There must be a certain amount of dignity and reserve and deference, or else the school cannot continue. The ideal teacher is the one who can secure these attitudes from children in the school-room, but who can put himself *en rapport* with pupils on the playground, so that they will be perfectly free with him, and feel that he is one of them, but yet a true and valued leader.

DISCIPLINE AND PUNISHMENT

XX

PURE DESPOTISM IN CHILD TRAINING*

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EDUCATION has for its object the formation of character. To curb restive propensities, to awaken dormant sentiments, to strengthen the perceptions and cultivate the tastes, to encourage this feeling and repress that, so as finally to develop the child into a man of well proportioned and harmonious nature—this is alike the aim of parent and teacher. Those, therefore, who advocate the use of authority, and if need be force, in the management of children, must do so because they think these the best means of compassing the desired object—formation of character. Paternity has to devise some kind of rule for the nursery. Impelled by the creed, partly by custom, partly by inclination, paternity decides in favor of a pure despotism, proclaims its word the supreme law, anathematizes disobedience, and exhibits the rod as the final arbiter in all disputes. And, of course, this system of discipline is defended as the one best calculated to curb restive propensities, awaken dormant sentiments, etc., etc., as aforesaid. Suppose, now, we inquire how the plan works. An unamiable little urchin is pursuing his own gratification regardless of the comfort of others—is perhaps annoyingly vociferous in his play; or is amusing himself by teasing a com-

**Purpose of
education**

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panion; or is trying to monopolize the toys intended for others in common with himself. Well, some kind of interposition is manifestly called for. Paternity, with knit brows, and in a severe tone, commands desistence—visits anything like reluctant submission with a sharp “Do as I bid you”—if need be, hints at a whipping or the black hole—in short carries coercion, or the threat of coercion, far enough to produce obedience. After sundry exhibitions of perverse feelings, the child gives in; showing, however, by its sullenness the animosity it entertains. Meanwhile paternity pokes the fire and complacently resumes the newspaper under the impression that all is as it should be. Most unfortunate mistake!

If the thing wanted had been the mere repression of noise, or the mechanical transfer of a plaything, perhaps no better course could have been pursued. Had it been of no consequence under what impulse the child acted, so long as it fulfilled a given mandate, nothing would remain to be said. But something else was needed. Character was the thing to be changed rather than conduct. It was not the deeds, but the feeling from which the deeds sprung that required dealing with. Here were palpable manifestations of selfishness—an indifference to the wishes of others, a marked desire to tyrannize, an endeavor to engross benefits intended for all—in short, here were exhibitions on a small scale of that unsympathetic nature to which our social evils are mainly attributable. What, then, was the thing wanted? Evidently an alteration in the child's disposition. What was the problem to be solved? Clearly to generate a state of mind which had it previously existed would have prevented the offending actions. What was the final end to be achieved?

Unquestionably the formation of a character which should spontaneously produce greater generosity of conduct. Or, speaking definitely, it was necessary to strengthen that sympathy to the weakness of which this ill-behavior was traceable.

But sympathy can be strengthened only by exercise. No faculty whatever will grow, save by the performance of its special function—a muscle by contraction; the intellect by perceiving and thinking; a moral sentiment by feeling. Sympathy, therefore, can be increased only by exciting sympathetic emotions. A selfish child is to be rendered less selfish, only by arousing in it a fellow feeling with the desires of others. If this is not done, nothing is done.

Qualities
must be
developed by
exercise

Observe, then, how the case stands. A grasping, hard natured boy is to be humanized—is to have whatever germ of better spirit may be in him developed; and to this end it is proposed to use frowns, threats, and the stick! To stimulate that faculty which originates our regard for the happiness of others, we are told to inflict pain, or the fear of pain! The problem is—to generate in a child's mind a sympathetic feeling; and the answer is—beat it, or send it supperless to bed!

Thus we have but to reduce the subjection theory to a definite form to render its absurdity self evident. Contrasting the means to be employed with the work to be done, we are at once struck with their utter unfitness. Instead of creating a new internal state which shall exhibit itself in better deeds, coercion can manifestly do nothing but forcibly mould externals into a coarse semblance of such a state. In the family, as in society, it can simply restrain; it cannot educate. Just as the recollection of Bride-

Subjection
does not
educate

well, and the dread of a policeman, whilst they serve to check the thief's depredations, effect no change in his morals, so, although a father's threats may produce in a child a certain outside conformity with rectitude, they cannot generate any real attachment to it. As some one has well said, the utmost that severity can do is to make hypocrites; it can never make converts.

Do but gain a boy's trust; convince him by your behavior that you have his happiness at heart; let him discover that you are the wiser of the two; let him experience the benefits of following your advice, and the evils that arise from disregarding it; and fear not you will readily enough guide him. Not by authority is your way to be obtained; neither by reasoning; but by inducement. Show in all your conduct that you are thoroughly your child's friend, and there is nothing that you may not lead him to. The faintest sign of your approval or dissent will be his law. You have won from him the key of all his feelings; and, instead of the vindictive passions that severe treatment would have aroused, you may by a word call forth tears, or blushes, or the thrill of sympathy—may excite any emotion you please—may, in short, effect something worth calling education.

If we wish a boy to become a good mechanic, we insure his expertness by an early apprenticeship. The young musician that is to be, passes several hours a day at his instrument. Initiatory courses of outline drawing and shading are gone through by the intended artist. For the future accountant, a thorough drilling in arithmetic is prescribed. The reflective powers are sought to be developed by the study of mathematics. Thus, all training is founded on the

principle that culture must precede proficiency. In such proverbs as—"Habit is second nature," and "Practice makes perfect," men have expressed those net products of universal observation on which every educational system is ostensibly based. The maxims of a village schoolmistress and the speculations of a Pestalozzi are alike pervaded by the theory that the child should be accustomed to those exertions of body and mind which will in future life be required of it. Education means this or nothing.

Self-control

What now is the most important attribute of man as a moral being? What faculty above all others should we be solicitous to cultivate? May we not answer—the faculty of self-control? This it is which forms a chief distinction between the human being and the brute. It is in virtue of this that man is defined as a creature "looking before and after." It is in their larger endowment of this that the civilized races are superior to the savage. In supremacy of this consists one of the perfections of the ideal man. Not to be impulsive—not to be stirred hither and thither by each desire that in turn comes uppermost; but to be self-restrained, self-balanced, governed by the joint decision of the feeling in council assembled, before whom every action shall have been fully debated and calmly determined—this it is which education—moral education at least—strives to produce.

But the power of self-government, like all other powers, can be developed only by exercise. Who is to rule over his passions in maturity, must be practiced in ruling over his passions during youth. Observe, then, the absurdity of the coercive system. Instead of habituating a boy to be a law to himself as he is required in after life to be, it administers the

Self-government attained through exercise

law for him. Instead of preparing him against the day when he shall leave the paternal roof, by inducing him to fix the boundaries of his actions and voluntarily confine himself within them, it marks out these boundaries for him, and says—"cross them at your peril." Here we have a being who, in a few years, is to become his own master, and, by way of fitting him for such a condition, he is allowed to be his own master as little as possible. Whilst in every other particular it is thought desirable that what the man will have to do, the child should be well drilled in doing, in this most important of all particulars—the controlling of himself—it is thought that the less practice he has the better. No wonder that those who have been brought up under the severest discipline should so frequently turn out the wildest of the wild. Such a result is just what might have been looked for.

Despotism
unfits for life

Indeed, not only does the physical force system fail to fit the youth for his future position, it absolutely tends to unfit him. Were slavery to be his lot—if his after life had to be passed under the rule of a Russian autocrat, or of an American cotton planter, no better method of training could be devised than one which accustomed him to that attitude of complete subordination he would subsequently have to assume. But just to the degree in which such treatment would fit him for servitude must it unfit him for being a free man amongst free men.

XXI

PROBLEMS OF DISCIPLINE*

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N "breaking" animals, there is always a contest of will; but once a trainer succeeds in having an animal do what he wishes of it, there is not likely to be trouble thereafter. But if he fails, and gives up to the animal, he will conquer it later only at the cost of a relatively vast amount of time and nervous energy on both sides. The reason is apparent. Whatever the outcome of a first experience of this sort is, it tends to be regarded by the animal (or the child, either, who is non-reflective in respect to such matters) as a guide for future action under similar circumstances. So a five-year-old child who has, from the cradle on, bullied people will hardly ever get over feeling that he can continue to order them about whenever it is to his interest so to do. His whole organism—body, intellect, and emotions—gets toned through and through with the domineering temper. If you reform him you must begin and build up a new individual practically *de novo*. This it is that makes it imperative to train the child rationally from the very start.

And the first thing to do is to *let him alone* as much as possible. And especially must the neighbors and all strangers be kept almost wholly away

Avoid
spoiling

*From "Every-day Problems in Teaching," copyrighted, 1912. By permission of Bobbs-Merrill Co.

from him until the parent gets certain fundamental habits of response securely fixed in him. It is certainly not excessive to say that in America we are likely to be too free—too nervously, hysterically free—with our children. Then there seems to be developing among us a weak sentimentality, which leads many people to indulge a child in his every whim; and the more we indulge him the more discontented he is apt to become. The really happy children in American life today, so far as the writer knows them, are not the children who have never felt restraint, but those who, from the beginning, have been indulged in only those actions which they will be at liberty to practice under all circumstances. The really miserable child is the one who will acknowledge no authority, and who is incessantly trying to carry through his own designs. The more he coerces people the more he seems to lose emotional poise. In the light of contemporary science, and also of the experience of progressive peoples, it may be said that an immature creature requires the restraining hand of wise authority. But this restraint would not be much required in youth if we would be earnest and fair with the child from the beginning in all vital matters of conduct. If we were perfectly uniform in our moral attitudes, and firm in carrying out our commands, the child would early choose his course so as to keep in clear water; and he would be happy in this choice. But we must *start right*, so that the individual in his very first lessons will learn what he may do without hesitation, and what he must check himself in. It will not be necessary, with rational training, to be severe often; though it would be vastly better for every one concerned if a child should be punished soundly once or twice for an un-

desirable tendency, than if he should be let go today and tomorrow and the next day, until in the end he must be nagged every day about it.

Let us see how our principle would work out in some typical cases. Is it of advantage to a pupil to be favored so that his tasks are made a little lighter than those of his fellows, and his errors are excused more readily? Several mothers were recently discussing the principle in question in the presence of the writer. It appeared that a boy in the sixth grade, in the community in which these women lived, was regarded by his classmates as the object of special favor by the teacher. He was the son of the superintendent of schools. It was charged by these mothers that the teacher did not bear down upon him so hard as she did upon their own children. If he did not recite well in his classes, she would pass over his shortcomings lightly, but she would make up for her leniency when she criticised other pupils. These mothers said the teacher marked this particular boy higher than she did other pupils for the same quality of work; also, she was in the habit of overlooking mischievous conduct in the superintendent's son, which would be sharply dealt with in other pupils. In short, this boy, presumably on account of his paternal connection, was a *favorite pupil*. His failings were minimized and his virtues magnified as compared with his companions.

These mothers appeared to regret that the fathers of their own children were not members of the board of education, or did not occupy some other distinguished position which would incline teachers to show favor to their offspring. They seemed to think the boy who was favored had a great advantage over other children, though in reality he was no better than any

Too great
lenience an
unkindness

of them, if indeed he was as good as his associates. Foolish women! They can not look beyond the experience of the moment to what lies in the future. If they could, they would return thanks that their children were not favored for artificial reasons, and that they were going through the schools without anything commending them to the favor of teachers but genuine merit.

* * * * *

In some schools the son of a workman may not be excused for his errors, but the son of the governor may be; and when this goes on for some years, it happens that the latter child comes to feel that his errors will always be overlooked, and it is not necessary for him to take such care as others are obliged to take. But when this individual comes to fill his own place in the world, people will not overlook his errors. They will hold him responsible for all he does. While timid and hero-worshipping teachers may let the son of the governor slide through the school, his associates in maturity will not let him slide through the world.

For this reason, it would be well if the school could be more strict, if anything, with the children of the superintendent of schools and the members of the board of education than with other pupils. The only way to favor a child is to *train him right*, not to overlook his shortcomings, nor to fail to hold him to the performance of tasks within the range of his abilities.

* * * * *

There are profound changes taking place in our social life which make the sensible, wholesome rearing of children extremely difficult. Such changes have occurred in other civilizations, some of which

have not been able to solve the problems involved, and those peoples have fallen into decay. Just in the measure that community life becomes highly complex and luxury increases, in like measure does the danger that children will be "spoiled" increase. It has always been true that when people have lived a relatively simple life, every one having work of some kind to do, the children early learn to adjust themselves willingly and happily to the established regimen about them. When work is required to be done in order that people may obtain what they desire, it is easy for even a child to feel that it *must* be done, and that he must adapt himself to those who are responsible for the doing of it. But with the growth of urban life, children are not apt to feel the necessity of regular duties being performed and adults being obeyed, as they easily do in a simpler life. Under present-day urban conditions, children are trained by servants far more largely than they were when social life was less complex; and servants are to be ordered about, not obeyed. So, too, the mother in the modern city is often keyed up to such a pitch of excitement on account of social tension that she has not the leisure, the energy, or the inclination to work out moral situations with her children, and to follow them through until she establishes a feeling and a habit of adjustment to the customs and institutions of the community. She is usually nervous and in a hurry, and she settles problems on the basis of immediate and not future need. Let any fair-minded person observe how frequently children in an American city home are bribed to adapt themselves for the moment to a necessary rule of conduct, and he will be impressed with the way social strain is pressing in upon the child and "spoil-

ing'' him. It is remarkable to what extent this bribing business is carried on in some homes. But there comes a time when bribing will not do, and then the vicious character of this method of training stands revealed. It will help out of a present difficulty, but it corrupts the whole moral character of the child, and unfits him for life in modern society.

Need of the
masculine
element in
training

The most serious change taking place in our social life, as it affects the training of children, is the rapid elimination of men from the whole business. A really impressive fact was brought out while a group of gentlemen were discussing this matter in Chicago recently. Every member of the group but one confessed that the only times he saw his children during the week were Saturday afternoons and Sunday mornings, and often engagements would prevent his seeing much of them at these times. In the country, as in the city, pupils often pass entirely through the schools today without coming under the influence of a man at any point in their progress. Giving full credit to the happy results flowing from feminine influence in child training, it still can be said without qualification that nine out of ten boys will be more or less "spoiled" if they do not come under masculine control during a considerable part of their life in the school and outside. A woman can not effectively teach a boy certain lessons he ought to learn thoroughly in order that he may adjust himself to modern conditions. She may talk to him about his conduct, but she can not dynamize her talk so that it will take deep hold on impulse and check it or divert it as circumstances may require.

In the countries across the sea where practically all the teaching is done by men, there seems to an American observer often to be undue roughness in

the schools. In some of these places one misses the sympathy with the young child, and the patience in helping him through his difficulties, which is usually found in typical American schools. The invasion of our schools by women has, to a large extent, eliminated the rough-and-ready methods which are in force now in some countries of the Old World, and which were in fashion in our country fifty years ago. It is a commonplace remark that man is cruder and more biceptual, as it were, in his attitude toward the young than is woman. The former relies more largely on compulsion to attain his ends; the latter on persuasion. In the schoolroom, a woman can, as a rule, adapt herself to the spontaneous expressions of children more readily than the man can. It is fundamental in the masculine nature to coerce non-conformists into compliance with rules and regulations which have been instituted for their government; but feminine nature can easily tolerate a larger degree of independence, especially in the young.

While the development of tenderness in our schools is greatly to be commended, is there yet danger that it may go too far? Is it imperative that there should be a certain amount of sternness, even roughness, in the management of pupils, boys especially? The typical boy respects muscle more than he does kindness, gentleness, or any of the feminine virtues. An unprejudiced observer of our educational régime can not fail to see boys in our schools who are going to the bad mainly because they do not come under the hand of a strong man anywhere in their school course. Nothing but masculine vigor, not too much repressed, will properly impress such boys, and turn them from their evil ways. And not only do boys require such influence for their sound develop-

ment, but there seems to be need for it also in the girl's life, though the popular view is that while the boy should have the softening effect of woman's influence, the girl will come out all right even if she is taught from start to finish by one of her own sex.

In modern times people have become very responsive to the expressions of childhood. Many of us can not endure rigorous methods of dealing with children, because the circumstances of our lives have made us supersensitive to this sort of thing. Our forebears, who had rougher work than ourselves to do, were more dynamic in their attitude toward the young. Their sensibilities were not particularly keen in response to the apparent distress of a child who did not adapt himself to necessary rules of conduct in the home, the school, and the church. It is possible their sensibilities were not delicate enough; but it is more likely that our sensibilities are becoming too active, so that we supinely give way to children when they need, for their own welfare, efficient resistance, restraint, and control. This is certainly true in respect to a large proportion of the boys in our schools, and any pseudo-philosophy which over-emphasizes delicacy in dealing with them will prove a detriment not only to the boys themselves but to society at large. At any rate, there is slight danger that one positive-minded masculine individual in a school will nullify to a harmful degree tenderness therein.

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**Corporal
punishment**

It is not the intention to make a plea for corporal punishment as it was practised in our own schools twenty-five years ago; but it seems a decided mistake to prohibit it by law, so that it can not be used under any circumstances. Very sensitive people object to

the use of the rod, because they feel it is brutalizing; but this is projecting adult sensibility into young children, to the great disadvantage of the latter in their sound training. Of course, children are growing more sensitive to control, and they respond even more readily to gentle influences; but it is absurd to say that they have as yet evolved past the necessity of control through physical pain. In the hands of a very rough teacher, physical punishment is likely to do harm in a school; but the fact is, such teachers can not now be found in the schools in large numbers, as they were in the days gone by—within the memory of some of those who will read these pages.

The fear of physical pain is the only real corrective which some children can appreciate. If they develop normally they pass out of this stage, but it is perfectly normal, and probably morally wholesome, at a certain period in their development. Mention has been made of the rod; but there are other means of administering physical stimuli of a corrective sort which are far more effective than this. The rod and the ruler are apt to irritate, rather than to reform. What a refractory boy needs is to be made to realize that there is a vast power back of the law and the order which the teacher represents, and which he is asked to respect. This power must be impressed upon him through suggestion largely, and it can be much more forcibly expressed in other ways than in striking.

Suppose a malicious boy who is hostile to the spirit of the school is invited to a conference with the teacher, and the latter simply takes him in his arms, and gives him an inkling of tremendous strength, and makes him feel that if this strength were fully expressed upon him it would be the destruction of

him. The boy has not been injured in his experience, but he has been made conscious of great force, which might be at any time directed upon him if he should persist in non-conformity to the rules and regulations of the school. Punishment, to be effective, must be a matter of anticipation. One can stand the actual pain when it comes, but the thing that works reform upon an offender is looking forward to a sort of inevitable thing which is very likely to do considerable harm. No one is ever a good disciplinarian who is constantly exercising his power to the full. Really effective discipline is rarely expressed; it is rather felt by every one under its control.

Chastisement
alone a weak
rod

While objection has been urged to the prohibition of physical chastisement by law, so that it may be employed in extreme cases, still when it alone is relied upon to cure evil tendencies it must inevitably prove a disappointment. Parents and teachers might get a useful suggestion from the fact that as medicine becomes more scientific, physicians become less dogmatic in their theories concerning disease, and more cautious and reserved in their dealings with the human body. The ready-made doctor always knows what to do, and he never lets pass an opportunity to employ his drugs or his knife. Whenever he sees disordered function he attacks it directly, not considering that it may be only the outcome of very complicated and subtle disturbances lying far out of sight. The charlatan's procedure seems always to the uninitiated to be straightforward, direct, simple. If you show him a coated tongue, he "knows" you have "indigestion," or a "bad liver"; and so you must take a spoonful of his "specific" several times a day. But the competent physician understands that, to a greater or less extent, the whole organism is involved in any

particular malady. It has for some reason lost its resistant powers, and a cure can be achieved only when these are restored, which means that the entire program of every-day life must be taken into account.

The efficient doctor always seeks for the conditions that have prevented nature from exercising her recuperative influence, or that have turned her aside from her usual course; and then he attempts to modify these conditions. This leads him to place greater faith in hygiene, in the broadest sense, than in drugs, though this greatly complicates his task, and makes it less spectacular and dramatic in the eyes of the patient and his friends than the pyrotechnical display of the charlatan. When a man is ailing he likes to feel that something very specific and dynamic is being done for him. This is one reason why the row of tumblers and the boxes of pills have had such popularity by the bedside of the sick. When one is in the clutches of disease, he will often swallow stuff which nothing could induce him to take when he is in better condition to endure it. He hopes thus by heroic measures speedily to unmake what has been years perhaps in the making. He reasons in his naive way that it is with the human body as with a machine—a great effect can be produced instantly if one can only apply energy enough.

The keeping of the spirit in health and restoring it thereto when it becomes diseased bears some analogy to the treatment of the body. The charlatan in conduct is ever ready with his sovereign remedy for all the errancies of childhood and youth. His prescriptions are of such obvious appropriateness, too, in the eyes of many teachers and parents, that his counsel is eagerly sought and followed. In general, his system of moral and educational philosophy

reduces itself to this: when a child does wrong, his will is vicious or lethargic, and it should be purified and stimulated by pains and penalties of some sort. "I gave him a good sound whipping," said a mother to the writer recently, when she detected her boy of seven in the act of appropriating some money that did not belong to him. She did not give a moment's thought to modifying the environmental influences which nurtured this deed in her son. She simply applied her "specific" to the manifestation of the disease, and the complex, predisposing conditions were left exactly as they were originally.

(All modern study of child-nature is showing us ever more emphatically that behavior is in any particular case the outcome of an exceedingly intricate complex of impulses and motives; and the more one investigates the springs of conduct in childhood, the less confidence he feels in his ability to give off-hand instructions regarding the course to be followed in any special instance of wrong-doing. He feels the intelligent physician's dread of tampering with an organism which is but ill understood, and he suspects that the thing is ordinarily too complicated to be dealt with in the simple and heroic way which alone will satisfy "common-sense" people. Whipping or scolding affords a cheap and convenient method of procedure for all transgressions of the moral law, and it eases the feelings of those guardians of youth who think reform in one's nature comes about *per saltum*, as a consequence of violent experiences.) But unprejudiced students of such methods of punishment as a means of correcting juvenile offenses are agreed that in the majority of cases they are a failure. At best, as employed in youth, their influence is usually temporary, and they touch only the externalities

of conduct, not the springs thereof. The state has discovered that the prison and the whipping post do not reform young criminals; nothing can accomplish this but a long period of training that begins at the very bottom, and literally builds up a new moral structure. The method is slow, and it lacks in spectacular features; but human nature can not be transformed at the drop of the hat.

XXII

SELF-CONTROL THROUGH DISCIPLINE

(THE NEED OF THE PRE-ADOLESCENT)

HORACE HOLDEN

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AMONG the American children of today a disregard for constituted authority and a disrespect for law are evils that menace the future of our present great nation. These attitudes find expression among the less fortunate in a tendency toward socialism and anarchy as such, and among the more favored classes in exultant defiance of minor statutes and crafty circumvention of more important laws. In witness of the latter cases we have only to remember the countless transgressions of motor speed laws, to realize that the man of means intends to satisfy his own whims at the expense of the safety of others and to consider it a rather good joke if he is caught and fined. Or, again, if obstacles stand in the way of a business or marital situation, the only necessity for gratifying what he is pleased to call a successful issue is a lawyer shrewd enough to steer him clear of legal entanglements or to remove such difficulties entirely by the proper approach to the court or to the legislature. At the point where money ceases to be the means through which the individual seeks to attain his purpose, sedition creeps in, and that in turn fosters personal violence against those who seem to be the obstacles between the man and the object of his wilful determination.

This is a severe arraignment of the attitude of our people, or more correctly, of many of those to whom full franchise is allowed. Perhaps I may be criticised as a pessimist and as unpatriotic. To those who condemn me as a cynic, I would reply that my experiences in the financial world before I took up educational work may color my views to some extent, and yet it must certainly be allowed that an actual touch with the life of Wall Street and with men there who are considered representatively American, permits me to judge with greater knowledge of facts than the theorists do, who assume unreliable hypotheses and inveigh against all financiers and capitalists, reputable or otherwise, simply on general principles, and for the pay it provides. Probably there are no more insidious means through which opposition to constituted authority may be aroused than the columns of a periodical which indulges in the graceful pastime of "slinging mud." As to lack of patriotism every fibre of my being tells me that the best manners and customs, even if learned abroad, and the highest standard of honor and morality to which the American people are potentially able to attain without copying a foreign example, are none too good for this great country in which my forebears have lived for nearly three centuries, and for the founding of which they fought and died. But the example of Rome, and the experience of other republics, established the fact that, as self indulgence approaches a limit, just so rapidly is the fate of the nation endangered. And as no one can deny the existence of danger signals, I cry out while there is yet time to save. As I have assumed a diagnosis of the situation, the recommendation for the cure is in order. It does not lie in an overthrow of laws, but

rather the wise interpretation and enactment of those we have would do much toward improving the unfortunate conditions among older people.

The cure as
related to
children

I feel the real change must be wrought by starting earlier than with the adult. At present we cannot go further back than parental influence. It may be that we cannot begin before the child is conscious that he exists. At that very moment, however, the mother should come into his horizon as the constituted authority to whom obedience is due. It is she who should first form the obedience habit in her child. As the child grows older the father looms up as another power that exists, a little less loved maybe, but none the less respected. And so the parents together may develop that wonderful quality in the boy's character that yields obedience to things that are right, because they are right. Beginning at the age of seven or eight, the school, absorbing as much of the boy's time as it does, overshadows the requirements of the parents for a response to law. If the school retains and extends this obedience habit during the formative period of the boy's life, it does well, for he will emerge ready for college and the world, a being who has learned obedience to parents, school, country, God—and through that learning has acquired that control of self, or obedience to the higher qualities or thoughts within him, that mean purity of mind, integrity of purpose, respect for the laws of God and man, and a dynamic power of success in whatever he turns his hand to do.

Self-control
the purpose of
discipline

This prospective development of character is, no doubt, gratifying to every parent. It is ideal, but it seldom occurs. Yet it may be encouraged to do so. It is first the problem of the parent, and then of the school. The parents who leave young children to the

care of nurses in their early years, and then expect any school to make good their omissions, will not only be disappointed, but they are traitors to their children and to their country as well, however many banquets they may attend on Washington's birthday or flags they may display on the Fourth of July. The parents, however, who have "devoted themselves" to their children only to encourage their indulgence and laugh at their disobedience, and who, to cap the climax, entertain maudlin views about punishment, or interfere with the discipline of the school, are even worse than the former class. Perhaps there may be some perfect children. It depends very much upon who contributes to the census taking how great the number is. Personally I have never come in touch with a boy who did not benefit by at least occasional discipline for self-control. On the principle that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, I should rather see the lusty little lad of ten or twelve full of pranks and displaying some impetuosity as he learns the lesson of self-control that is to prove his salvation in later years, than to see him the quintessence of perfection. Discipline is objective rather than subjective, and the means of its enforcement should not defeat its purpose; namely, the development of self-control, which includes in its broadest interpretation the mastery of the four cardinal natures—the physical, the mental, the moral and the social. We must not infer, however, that discipline is confined to punishment. Our foregoing platform particularly states that it is systematic training, and as such it involves the parents, instructors and companions of the child in a task that must be prompted by love and wrought with patience and completeness, else their efforts are quite in vain.

Spasmodic attacks upon the training of the boy require more energy in the end, and are obviously unfair to the child. A wide humanitarianism must attend our work in the thought that the labor is for the future as well as for the present; for direct and positive results upon generations yet unborn. If our children are properly trained, they in turn will know how to train theirs, and perhaps, in the course of ages, the perfect man will be at last revealed. There is no absolution for unfaithful stewardship and no intercession at the eleventh hour can atone for our failures and omissions as the task is assumed at the beginning. Whenever the responsibilities of parenthood and the offices of a teacher are deliberately and voluntarily assumed, the personal sacrifices that are necessary for the training of the child may be welcomed as a further step toward the control of one's self. It is deplorable that marriages are so frequently ill advised, both in regard to the congeniality of husband and wife, and in their physical ability to produce children at least normally endowed at birth for their experience on the voyage of life! Equally unfortunate is the fact that teaching is recognized as a profession rather than an art, with a majority following the vocation and accepting the insignificant remuneration it returns, because worthless at other occupations.

Good
suggestion
necessary
at every point

In every one of the four phases of the boy's training, good suggestions, or habits, should reach him at the very start. Overzeal in impressing the good is apt to arouse a reaction, however, and the boy, finding the right ways too pedantic, turns with relief to the wrong. As growth is constant, and as each day brings to the boy new problems to solve, so constant should his training be, always discounting exigencies

that may arise, as far as possible. This again is a square deal for him and forestalls much of the punitive discipline that would otherwise be a natural event. And yet occasions do come up, and will continue to appear, when punishment is necessary to drive home a properly interpreted *subjection to authority*. It is irrational to punish effect without looking to cause to ascertain whether it be physical, mental, moral or social. It is a further mistake not to relate cause and effect very clearly in the boy's mind at the time of his disciplinary experience. It is reprehensively wrong not to punish efficiently, if the point is reached where punishment is necessary. The function of punishment is not to induce subterfuge and stimulate right actions only through the fear of the consequences of doing wrong. The child should be made to see that it follows temporary digressions, rather than prevents them. The parent, father with son, and mother with daughter, or perhaps a trusted teacher if the boy is very closely in the school's care, is the only proper person to handle these situations. No regulations may be framed to cover all branches of the code. Broadly speaking, punishment in kind that relates cause and effect immediately and effectively in the boy's mind, is right and best. Decisions in regard to punishment test the wisdom and the patience of the administrator to the utmost, and perhaps his love for the child as well, for how often have we heard foolish parents remark: "We love our children too much to punish them." I do not doubt their affection for their offspring but I know that their love is directed only toward themselves. I do not even stand aghast at corporal punishment, and cry out that it is merely a display of superior bestial force, for as I live with the boy, and love him, and watch him in his work and play, I am conscious that

he is very much a little animal, and may reasonably be handled as such; especially when it may be shown him that he has let his physical impulses run away from the self-control which his moral and mental nature should have exercised.

Value of
example

We may well ask the question: "Are we setting the boy a good example? Should he suffer if we are to blame for his faults?" Those indeed, are hard inquiries to reply to. All we can do is to be sure that we, as parents and teachers, are worthy of emulation. If we suffer from his maladies, it is with greater reprehensibility. Pattern and precept form a sterner discipline for the sincere companion of the boy, than perhaps the following thereof does for the child himself.

Loving
intimacy
simplifies
discipline

The problem of discipline in both its meanings would be greatly simplified if there were only stronger intimacy between parents and children, teachers and pupils, than there is at present. And the co-operation of teacher and parent would also be of assistance. A loving confidence is natural where, from infancy, the mother has been in close personal touch with the daughter and the father with the son. This is the strongest contribution through the discipline of love to the development of self-control, that power within the boy which means the directing of the will, the subjugation of the emotions, and obedience to a Higher Power. It leads from the lower to the larger life. It is a matter of training and education. Every child is potentially able to acquire it under wise and loving discipline. But there is no "royal road to learning," no short cut to the mastery of the ego. The child who has been taught young enough the necessity and practice of self-control has received the one advantage in that direction that Providence allows.

XXIII

DISCIPLINE CONSTRUCTIVE RATHER THAN DESTRUCTIVE

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HE happiness of home life is so often clouded by the need of correction that it is really a serious problem to parents how to discipline in such a way as to build up rather than to destroy the individuality of the child. The best discipline is that which leads to self-discipline. This must be true as the aim of discipline is character and character is the resultant of will trained to act habitually from right motives. Virtue implies moral strength of will, desire to do that which is morally right. For the moral life there must be an awakened intelligence and an emotional nature quick to respond to every sense of duty, then follows naturally upon every question of voluntary conduct, the sequence of a moral act, feeling, thought, decision, action.

It has been truthfully said that every time a boy takes his first two steps, feeling and thought, without proceeding further, he strengthens the habit of neglect of duty; when he adds the third step, decision, without completing it with the fourth step, action, he becomes weaker as an executive moral force. It must be borne in mind as an important fact in the training of our boys and girls that every act is an important act for it leads to habit.

Feeling and
thought must
be accom-
panied by
decision and
action

“Sow a thought and you reap an act;
Sow an act and you reap habit;
Sow habit and you reap character.”

Character expresses itself in conduct. Knowledge awakens feeling; feeling gives direction to the will, and will determines conduct.

**Destructive
discipline**

So often the parent, in mistaken fondness, says, “We will correct this child when he is old enough to understand.” So the little saucy word is overlooked, or the rude play act continued until the child has outgrown the “cunning” age, and then perhaps suddenly father awakens with displeasure to the rudeness he himself has encouraged. Then follow harsh correction, rebellion, misunderstanding. This destructive process is more often the secret of home failure in discipline than parents would be willing to admit. Sometimes the mother hesitates to set the young child right in manners at the table and habits of greediness, untidiness, thoughtlessness of others, take the place of the finer qualities that should be taking shape. Then the mother has her sharp awakening and reprimands, unjust and severe, follow upon the conduct she herself has permitted to become habit.

These are destructive rather than constructive processes in discipline. We do not build our houses in that way. We first think out our superstructure and then stone by stone is laid with reference to the ideal plan. No one would tolerate the economic waste of foundations laid without reference to future working plans. Yet economies in human life and conduct are often, through indifference or ignorance, not so well considered.

**Discipline
does not
necessitate
punishment**

Discipline does not necessarily mean punishment. It has a broader meaning than that. Like the words “censor,” “censure,” “critic,” “criticism,” and

other kindred words, discipline may signify both favorable and unfavorable attitudes of mind, and as such it carries with it a certain amount of dread which tends to fix upon it the latter meaning. There seems to be a tendency when a word has double range in meaning, both of constructive and destructive force, to gradually reduce it to the latter. "Discipline" is such a word. "To give the punishment of the strap;" "to chastise;" to punish by way of correction and training; to improve by penal methods; severe training corrective of faults; instruction by means of misfortune, suffering—these are familiar definitions of the word, but they cover only its lower ranges.

Discipline in its broader and happier sense includes all the constructive processes in education. It aims to educate by instruction and exercise; to accustom to regular and systematic action; to bring under control so as to act systematically; to train to proper subordination and obedience; to substitute good for bad; to develop all that is best in child nature. This is the constructive ideal of discipline; it is formative, not reformative.

Constructive discipline assumes that with moral training there must be moral responsibility and moral accountability. We cannot educate to goodness unless we believe in goodness, not in the abstract but actual goodness in the individual. Children are never made good by believing they are bad. Not, what shall I do with the child who has done wrong, but what can I do so that this child may choose to do right, are the really formative questions.

The action of the very young child is non-moral, not immoral. He is not bad. He is not consciously good. He moves but impulsively along the pathway

Full meaning
of discipline

The young
child
non-moral

of a motor idea, whereas the conduct of the more experienced is restrained by reflection. Under the influence of proper education, the first motor impulses are met by inhibitive ideas, then arise conflict, doubt, hesitation. It is at this point that discipline is needed, the external word of counsel or authority from parent or teacher. Conduct at first impulsive must become rational, selective.

There must be instruction in duty, concrete instruction, for the child lives in the world of his senses, not in the abstract ideas. The basis of true moral character must be laid in obedience. The child must learn that above him and around him there is law and that law is absolute and for his good. This is nature's way of teaching. Authority is external at first, but to be of any worth obedience must be from motives that make for character. External force or fear may restrain from wrongdoing but the habit of such obedience is destructive to nobility of character. Love and a high sense of duty are far more commanding. They win the whole nature.

Moral
training not
incidental

It is also a fact never to be ignored that moral training is not incidental, to receive now and then a spurt of effort. It is a central and vital function. Instruction must be constant in the atmosphere of the home, in the spirit of the school, in the frequent word of instruction or criticism. Ignorance is not the mother of virtue. Line upon line, precept upon precept, is as necessary for the children of today as for the children of that long ago when Solomon was the great teacher. Wise guidance the child must have during those early years "when he is making his first reactions to the great world of stimuli—physical, social and religious." But this guidance should never take the form of irritating commands or of ceaseless nagging, neither should the voice of authority be loud

and harsh. The companionable parent makes the companionable child. It is a happy home where parents and children talk *with* each other, not *at* each other.

The most effective method in discipline is positive rather than negative. Love has stronger mastery than fear. The expulsive power of a good idea cannot be measured. There is that dramatic story of legions of devils entering the herd of swine, tearing and rending them in the country of the Gadarenes. Taking the swine as the symbol of the unfilled mind that is to be directed, what a pity it was that good spirits had not first entered and taken possession of the swine before the evil spirits found them empty. High ideals, noble endeavors, leave no room for evil imaginings. Good habits of life and thought come to us as directly through unconscious processes as through direct teaching, yes, even more direct, for the influence of environment is constant.

The most
effective
method

Power through suggestion of a noble personality is beyond all other teaching. "If a teacher have mind and heart large enough, his life becomes a tremendous suggestion every hour that he is in contact with his pupils," says Dr. George Dawson. This is equally true of parents. They constantly teach and discipline by what they are. And, alas, immoral attitudes are equally suggestive as teachers. "The mother who forever worries, grieves, fears, scolds, raves, fattens on scandal, must induce depraved states in the minds of the children growing up about her through the potency of suggestion. Is it to be wondered at if her children grow up into selfish, jealous, narrow, uncharitable beings, when such qualities have been impressed upon their intellects through all their formative years?" Such is the description of the destructive influence of an unworthy mother. Glorious beside it is the picture of the honored mother found in

the book of Proverbs. As the crowning glory of her work, "Her children rise up and call her blessed," says the written word and it might truthfully be added, "And they shall be like unto her."

Father and
mother both
necessary
in child
training

The discipline of the home belongs only half to the mother. The father who, by badness of life or unreasonableness of temper, puts before his boys an unworthy example, is destructive of character and alas! alas! too often the evil that he does lives after him. Whereas the father who lives nobly needs no higher honor than the sons who succeed him. It is true and we must believe it, for the optimism that it puts into life, that good habits of life are helped as truly by good companionship as they are hindered by bad.

Examples of
constructive
and destruc-
tive discipline

In the application of convincing truths it is good sometimes to illustrate by familiar, oft recurring examples. Acts of constructive and of destructive discipline are both as familiar in our every-day life as the exterior of the houses upon our street. One laughs at the hypothetical mother who warned her children not to put beans in their noses and it is not hard to understand the psychology of the fact that she found their noses stuffed with beans when she returned home. Said a young mother to her little girl, "Now you have on a clean dress and I shall punish you by putting you to bed if you get it dirty." Said another mother to her child, "Now you are my clean little lady and father will be so glad to see you so clean when he comes home." It is easy to see which mother was constructive and which destructive.

A mother sat sewing and the child of four was playing near. As she touched the scissors or the thread or cloth or leaned on mother's shoulder or against the sewing machine, the querulous voice exclaimed, "No, no, Judith must not do that." And

with equal sharpness the child's voice exclaimed, "Me must do sumfin." Sad, turbulent current of rebellion stirred by negative commands. If only the mother had found employment for those little fingers and turned the emotional currents into the joy of imitation! Christina Rossetti's advice is good for every day practice:

"Seldom can't.
Seldom don't.
Never shan't.
Never won't."

Two boys in different schools were heard uttering oaths on the school ground. The teacher of one called the boy up before the school and whipped him. The angry boy waited only to be out of hearing then swore in deeper profanity than before because it was an angry oath. The teacher of the other boy talked with him in such a way that he regretted the offense and thought it reasonable when, for punishment, he was forbidden the privileges of the playground. Both boys were punished, but one boy was made bitter and rebellious by his punishment. The second boy was convinced of wrong and resolved to overcome his fault.

It has been well said that "to teach a child continuously what is right without securing in some way corresponding connections with right conduct is to make the child oblivious to such relations." He must learn by the law of consequence. Bad impulses must be followed by corresponding results, good impulses by satisfaction. The absoluteness of moral law, hence the obligation to obedience, must be fundamental in all instruction. Knowledge of what is right and a growing disposition to do what is right, these are constructive principles that must underlie all our ends and aims in discipline.

XXIV

THE ENDS, CHARACTERISTICS AND KINDS OF PUNISHMENTS*

EMERSON E. WHITE

Ends not
revenge, but
prevention
and reform



THE first and essential inquiry before us is, "What are the ends or objects of punishment?" One of the most obvious facts in human experience is that pain and loss follow the violation of beneficent law, and a little reflection will suffice to show that they are the punitive consequences of such a violation. We are sometimes startled by the fearful results that follow the violation of physical law, but sin against man's moral and spiritual nature is attended with even severer penalties. There are no such sufferings in this life as those that follow the violation of the moral law.

But pain and loss are not simply the punitive consequences of transgression. Their purpose is not merely to vindicate violated law, but to prevent its future violation. They are the sentinels that guard every law of our being, and as such they look forward rather than backward.

But the prevention of wrongdoing as an end of punishment is too general to serve fully our present purpose, and so we need to seek for more immediate and special ends. These will appear when it is seen that punishment prevents wrongdoing (1) by reforming the wrongdoer, (2) by deterring others from wrongdoing, and (3) by condemning wrongdoing,

*From "School Management," by permission of the American Book Co.



WATCHING THE BREAKERS
After the Painting by Winslow Homer.
In the Art Institute of Chicago.

thus lessening the desire to do wrong. These three ends may be considered the special objects of punishment.

It follows that the first questions to be asked, when considering the propriety of punishing a child are, "What will be the effect of the proposed punishment on the child? Will it help him to needed self-control? Will it make him better?" If these questions cannot be confidently answered in the affirmative, the punishment should at least be deferred until other inquiries can be instituted.

Moreover, we may be fully satisfied that the proposed punishment will be helpful, and yet be wise in deferring it. The *necessity* of punishment is always to be considered, and here a careful distinction is to be made between the ill deserts of an offender and his need of punishment. A pupil may deserve punishment and yet may not need it. There may be other and better means of securing his reformation. School administration presents frequent occasions for the comparison of means with a view of using the best—the most effective. Punishment is never necessary, if justifiable, when better means will accomplish the desired end.

This is accomplished by bringing the motive of fear to bear upon those who may be disposed to do the wrong for which the offender is punished. The punishment thus serves as a restraint, a warning, and so prevents or lessens wrongdoing. It is here that fear has a legitimate place in discipline, and the appeal to it may not only be right, but necessary.

This restraining influence of punishment is an important consideration in determining the propriety of its infliction. The wise parent will ask, "Is this punishment needed to restrain other children from

The
restraining
influence of
punishment

the commission of the offense?" The answer to this question does not depend on the simple fact that the punishment is fitted to serve as a warning. The more important consideration is the *need* of the warning. The offense may be one that no other child is likely to commit; and so there may be no occasion, much less a necessity, for the warning. On the contrary, the offense may be one which others may be tempted to commit, if there be no punitive restraint.

In view of these two ends of punishment, it must suffice to add here, that when a parent is fully assured that a punishment will be helpful to the child punished, and is also needed as a warning and restraint to others, his way is clear, provided other means will not better accomplish the same ends. On the contrary, if a punishment is not likely to make the wrongdoer better, and is not needed as a warning to others, its infliction is both unwise and unnecessary.

To condemn
wrongdoing

Under God's government, the right issues in gain, and the wrong in pain or loss; and the gain is a reward for the right, and the pain or loss a penalty for the wrong. Pain and privation are ordained punishments for wrongdoing, and their purpose is to prevent it. Besides punishment enhances our conception of the nature and guilt of a wrong act, and becomes a measure and indicator of the degree of such guilt. It may, indeed, be doubted whether our intuitive knowledge of right and wrong would greatly influence our conduct, if good and evil were not respectively associated with right and wrong *as consequences*. The law speaks in vain to a man insensible to pain or loss.

Law is a
schoolmaster

This principle explains the fact that offenses in the State which are not punished by law are not regarded by the people as so culpable as those which

are punished. The fact that an act is made a penal offense enhances the public appreciation of its guilt; this, too, independent of the fact that it is a violation of positive law. "The law is our school-master,"—a quickener of the conscience and a clarifier of the moral judgment.

It is conceded that this end of punishment, so important in the State, has a comparatively small place in the school and home. It is within the teacher's power to educate the conscience by better means than penal inflictions; and an increasing number of teachers are learning that neither law nor penalties are needed to enable them to enforce duty and restrain wrong. And yet there are schools, too many, in which both law and punishment may still be needed to bring home to the lawless and disobedient the culpability of their conduct.

More depends on the certainty of punishment than on its severity. A mild punishment, uniformly administered, is more effective for reformation or for warning than a severe punishment fitfully administered. This principle is so fully illustrated in penal experience, that it seems unnecessary to cite examples. It is generally conceded that the special weakness in the government of American cities is the fitful and uncertain enforcement of law, especially laws for the suppression of crime and vice. When crime is fitfully punished, criminals count and take their chances, and crime abounds. The spasms of law enforcement, sometimes occasioned by the uprising of the people, serve only as temporary checks to vice and lawlessness. Neither the law, nor the officer sworn to execute it, is "a terror to evildoers."

**Punishment
should be
certain**

We have a perfect model of law enforcement in the Divine Government, in which penalty invariably

follows transgression. Every time we put our fingers into the fire we are burned, and thus even a child learns to keep out of the fire. An unsupported body invariably falls to the ground, and man learns not to leap from high precipices. Every law that touches man's nature is characterized by certain enforcement; and the transgressor learns, often by sad experience, that it is not only sinful, but foolish, to violate the beneficent laws of his being.

This principle has its special application in school discipline in the enforcement of *penal rules*. When a law is enacted, forbidding an offense, the law must be uniformly enforced; and when a law cannot or ought not to be enforced, it should be repealed. It is not meant that the punishment inflicted must be always the same in kind or degree, but it should be *certain*. There must be no counting of chances when formal rule forbids an offense.

The teacher has greater freedom and discretion in treating offenses which are not forbidden by positive law; and it is here that the important questions raised in discussing the ends of punishment can be more fully considered and applied. The teacher is not shut up to the infliction of punishment, but other means for attaining the desired ends are open to him. Formal law and penalty have at best but a small place in home and school discipline whose supreme end is character training. *But when law is invoked, there must be certainty in its enforcement.*

Justice first demands that punishment be proportionate to the offense in quantity or degree. This does not simply mean that the greater the offense the greater the punishment, but that punishment must not be greater than is needed to secure its ends. There must be no excess of severity, and this involves due

Punishment
should bear a
just relation
to the
offense

consideration of the conditions that affect the sensibility of those punished, including age, sex, home training, etc. On the contrary, punishment must not be so light as to fail of its purpose and beget a contempt for it. Such a punishment would not only be useless, but would do more harm than good.

Justice next requires that punishment be adapted to the offense in quality or kind; *i. e.*, that it have some quality that "fits" the offense—what Bentham calls "characteristicalness." Nothing much more surely offends one's sense of justice than the infliction of the same punishment for very unlike offenses.

**The kind of
punishment**

These important principles of justice are increasingly embodied in penal legislation. They have, indeed, characterized the penal reforms of the past two centuries. More and more have penalties been made commensurate in degree with heinousness of offenses, and more and more have penalties been fitted in kind to offenses. "No distinction in punishment, none in guilt," is a law maxim increasingly recognized in penal codes.

No principle needs to be more carefully observed by the parent and teacher than justice. An unjust punishment always does more harm than good, and usually it does only harm. No mistake in discipline is more likely to occasion trouble than the punishing of a child in such a manner as to create the feeling that it was unjust. It is far better to err on the side of leniency than on that of severity. Neither an unusual provocation, nor anger, nor apparent stubbornness, can ever be pleaded as an excuse for punishing a child too severely.

**Justice in
punishments**

Attention has been called to the fact that under God's government, called by some Nature's government, pain or loss follows transgression as dis-

**Punishment
should be
natural**

ciplinary consequences, and these penalties are said to be *natural or consequential*. The results that follow the violation of physical law are obvious consequences; and the same is true, though perhaps less obvious, in the violation of the laws of one's moral and spiritual nature. Falsehood, dishonesty, slander, jealousy, malice, etc., are all attended with natural reactions—falsehood by a loss of confidence, slander by a loss of esteem and often by defamation in return, jealousy by a loss of happiness, etc. These painful consequences of wrongdoing constitute no small part of the discipline of life. Men thus learn by experience, often by bitter experience, that “the way of the transgressor is hard.”

There are other penalties which do not inevitably follow transgression, and yet have so close a relation to it that they seem natural reactions. The abuse of a right or privilege, for example, works by a natural principle of justice in forfeiture, and such a penalty is properly called natural. The same is true of the penalty called restitution, the making good any loss or damage to the property of another.

Two illustrations, the one from the family and the other from the school, will suffice to make clear the distinction between natural and artificial punishment, and also to show the application of the former in correcting wrongdoing.

Two fathers give a son a pocket knife, and each accompanies the gift with the injunction that nothing useful must be injured with the knife. Each son disobeys the injunction by whittling the front gate. One of the fathers calls his son to him, and, pointing out his offense, says, “Harry, you have disobeyed me, and I must whip you,” and, suiting the action to the word, he gives the boy a whipping. This is one way to

correct the offense, and it may be effective. The other father calls his son to him, explains the nature of his offense, and says, "Harry, you have forfeited your knife. Give it back to me." The father takes the knife, and keeps it too, until, in the future, he can restore it, with full confidence that it will not be misused. The second Harry will doubtless shed as many tears as the first, but they have a different source, and work out a different moral result.

Two teachers find it necessary, in their judgment, to forbid profanity on the playground, and in each school a boy violates the rule. One of the teachers calls the offender to account, and, having properly set forth the nature of the offense, says, "John, you have violated the rule by a wicked act, and I must whip you," and, suiting the action to the word, he gives the boy a whipping, either before the school or privately, as he may deem wise. This is one way to correct profanity, but few teachers have thus been able to banish it from the playground. The other teacher calls the offender to him, and, having explained the offense as an abuse of a privilege, says, "John, you have forfeited the privilege to take your recess on the playground with the other boys. Hereafter, you will take your brief recess after the other boys have come in; but, when I am satisfied that you will observe the rule, I shall be glad to restore the privilege now taken from you." This second John can but feel that his punishment is just, and it will not be many days before he will be ready to give such assurances as will justify the removal of the penalty.

It seems unnecessary to give other examples of punishment by consequence or forfeiture. It must suffice to add, that, if we were sufficiently keen-eyed we would see right beside every offense of childhood

a natural consequence, which, if uniformly and widely enforced, would be usually effective. It is clear that such a punishment appeals strongly to the sense of justice, and that it is free from those brutalizing tendencies that sometimes accompany the infliction of arbitrary penalties.

It must, however, be conceded that the successful administration of a system of natural punishment in the family or in the school requires higher qualifications in the governor than an artificial system. Any parent or teacher can slap, shake, or whip a child. This requires only impulse and muscle; but it requires self-control, firmness, patience, ingenuity, judgment, and sympathy to suppress the impulse to strike the offender, and effectually to enforce natural penalties.

The experience of the schools shows, that, as teachers increase in skill and personal influence, mild and natural punishments are found to be more and more effective; and this indicates that all beneficent reforms in school discipline necessarily wait on the improvement of the teachers. There were once many schools (there may possibly be a few now) in which the rod represented more controlling influence than the teacher.

It is also true that the school has penal limitations not experienced in the family, and some of these are imposed by family interests, but more by family training. It is only when the interests and training of the family and school are in harmony that the best results in school discipline are attainable. It is also true that the school has some advantages over the family in discipline. Many a child that is governed with difficulty at home is easily controlled in

school. Certain natural penalties—suspension, for example—can only be used in school.

This leads to the inquiry, “Has the principle of punishment by consequence any natural limitations in school and family discipline?” When is a parent or teacher justified in the use of corporal punishment?

There is at least one obvious limitation of natural punishment, and this is the existence of insubordination or rebellion. Suppose, for illustration, that the second Harry, referred to above, should meet his father’s direction to give back the forfeited knife with, “I won’t do it,” and then flee from his presence. Suppose the second John should meet the teacher’s order to remain in at recess with, “I shall take my recess with the boys, and shall not stay in.” Is not the assigned natural punishment in each case broken down by rebellion? Rebellion is the end of authority, if it be not subdued. Would it not be clearly the second father’s duty to make Harry return promptly and give him the knife? Would it not be as clearly the second teacher’s duty to make John remain in at recess? Insubordination to rightful authority may be properly met by force. When lawless men set at defiance the civil authority, then is the time for the police force, and, if need be, military force. So, when a child rebels against the authority of the parent or the teacher, the use of the rod to compel obedience may be justifiable. Open insubordination may not only justify, but even make necessary, a resort to proper corporal chastisement.

It is true that open insubordination in school may be met by suspension, “a natural punishment,” but this is not feasible in the family; and, in our judgment, small boys ought not to be suspended from school. What they specially need is to be controlled

The
treatment
of rebellion

Control
a child’s
birthright*

in school, control being every child's birthright. In the case of pupils under, say, twelve years of age, suspension from school should certainly be the last resort, not the first; but when pupils are over fourteen years of age—old enough to know the value of school privileges—suspension may wisely be the first resort in case of insubordination. The decisive fact is that insubordination and rebellion cannot be tolerated or trifled with in any school. On the contrary, so long as a pupil will accept the penal consequences of his wrongdoing, the teacher has no occasion to use the rod. This, if used at all, is for the insubordinate and rebellious.

It is believed that the limit, thus found, to punishment by consequence, is a valuable fact in discipline. It is not only a limit to so-called natural penalties, but what is very important, to the use of corporal punishment. It leaves a place for force, but makes it a small and well defined place, and thus lessens its abuse.

improper
punishments

There are several kinds of punishment which are manifestly improper. The first are blows on the head, whether with the hand or a rod. The brain is the organ of the mind, and the head contains the brain, the same being protected in childhood by a very thin cranium or skull. Moreover, the brain is so delicate in texture that a slight concussion often results in injury, and sometimes in mental impairment. "I have no doubt," says Mann, "that the intellects of thousands of children have been impaired for life by the blows which some angry parent or teacher has inflicted upon the head." Boxing the ears is only a little less dangerous than blows on the upper part of the head. It is the testimony of physicians that the hearing of many children has been impaired by ear

boxing, the tympanum or eardrum being thus ruptured. The head of a child should be held too sacred for blows. Corporal punishment, when inflicted, should be with a rod applied below the loins, rather than upon the body or the hands.

It ought not to be necessary to add that no child should be violently shaken. It was once quite common for male teachers to make a show of their muscular power to frighten pupils, by seizing and vigorously shaking an unruly boy; and the writer has seen more than one woman shake a little child in a frightful manner. The nervous shocks thus produced are injurious, and the shaking of a child with its face turned away is very dangerous.

Improper punishments also include all personal indignities. Such inflictions are both mischievous and useless. A boy has not much manhood in him, even in embryo, that can endure such indignities without a feeling of resentment.

All degrading punishments are improper. It is true that the effect of punishment depends much on the conditions of the punished. A punishment that would be degrading in an American school might not be degrading in a barbarous society. The thing condemned is the infliction of a punishment that degrades or debases a child. Such a punishment is a moral injury. It tends to make the character pusillanimous, and the pupil insensible to disgrace.

But of all degrading punishments ever used, none are more culpable than the assaulting of a child with opprobrious epithets. The teacher who calls a dull child a dunce or a blockhead commits a crime which ought to be punished by dismissal—only a natural penalty for such an abuse of the teacher's office. There are teachers who pride themselves on the fact

that they never used the rod, and yet who pierce children's souls with bitter words, more cruel and more degrading than blows on the body. What thoughtful parent would not prefer to have a child whipped in school rather than called a liar, a dolt, a sneak or other like degrading epithet. Some one has said that striking a child in anger is not punishing, but fighting, and fighting a child at that; but the thrusting of a child through with bitter words is worse than fighting: it is soul murder—a slaughter of reputation and manly spirit. The good name of a pupil should be as dear to the teacher as the apple of his eye. And this leads to the observation that ridicule and sarcasm are weapons which few can wisely use, and, when used by even the wisest, they generally do more harm than good. Ridicule affects not only the child ridiculed, but also all sensitive children who witness it, creating such fear and timidity as become a hindrance to effort. Few sarcastic teachers are ever loved by their pupils. The fact that they seem to take pleasure in causing mortification and pain estranges noble natures, and they are usually as much disliked as they are feared. There may be rare instances when it is wise to take the conceit out of a student (not a child) by an effective touch of sarcasm or ridicule; but even in such a case, great care is required, less the wound be not worse for the student than the conceit.

It is not meant that a punishment is improper because it gives pain. There can be no punishment without pain of some sort. But there is a distinction between the infliction of useless or unnecessary pain, and pain that prevents a greater evil. The purpose of all natural law that touches man, is to promote his happiness and well being, and the violation of every

such law is attended with pain to prevent its repetition and consequent greater suffering.

There are various modes of inflicting punishment that possess one or more of the three characteristics above described, and deserve a passing notice. The more common of these are the manifestation of displeasure, the administering of reproof or rebuke or admonition, an appeal to the sense of shame, the marking of misconduct, detention from play, keeping after school, and the imposition of tasks.

The manifestation of displeasure is a natural reaction of misconduct, and its effectiveness will depend largely upon the degree of affection between the parent or teacher and the child. The displeasure of an enemy, or one much disliked, has little effect, but the disapproval of a friend brings grief.

The same is true of reproof or rebuke, these being, indeed, but an expression of displeasure. The silent reproof is sometimes more effective than the severest censure. The severity of reproof or rebuke should not only be proportionate to the offense, but should also be adapted to the nature of the child. There are natures so finely tempered that a look of displeasure is more painful and effective than a severe reprimand would be to some other child. Sharp reproof or the manifestation of anger fills such a sensitive child with terror. Strong terms of reproof or rebuke should be used very sparingly, and then only when dealing with the more insensible children, and for serious offenses.

The appeal to a sense of shame is to be made privately and only in case of offenses involving moral turpitude. If made in correcting light offenses, it will soon lose power, and be useless when it may really be needed. It is usually far better to appeal to a sense of honor than to a sense of shame.

The practice of marking the deportment of pupils on a numerical scale and making the same a part of their record, is quite common, especially in high schools and colleges. The best practice marks misdemeanors or failures in duty as demerits, no attempt being made to compare the virtue or moral worth of pupils—an attempt already considered. It simply notes observed or known offenses or shortcomings, without assuming to indicate moral worth, and it thus acts as a penal restraint, not as an incentive.

But the marking of demerits is manifestly too difficult to permit their use as a part of a pupil's record—an element in his recorded standing. It often happens that the mischievous pupil is sly and secretive, and so hides his misdemeanors from the recording pencil. Another pupil, much more deserving, is frank and open, and his mischiefs are in the teacher's eye. The recorded demerits of these two pupils may sadly fail to represent their comparative merits. Conduct escapes the percent table.

The detention from play, or keeping children after school, may be natural and proper punishment for certain offenses, but it should never be used when the fear of it is not strong enough to offset the desire to repeat the offense. The detention of a pupil, say, ten minutes, for an hour's unnecessary delay in reaching the school, and the requiring of pupils to remain and study ten minutes after school as a penalty for a half day's idleness, are examples of insufficient punishment. It is better to inflict no punishment than to impose such inadequate penalties.

The keeping of pupils after school "to make up lessons" usually loses its efficiency as soon as it becomes a practice. We have never seen a teacher with half a score or more of pupils "making up" unpre-

pared lessons after school, without discounting his wisdom and tact. Such a requirement is most effective when it is exceptional. We make no reference here to pupils remaining after school to receive needed assistance in any study. The sanitary conditions of a schoolroom after closing for the day are usually such as forbid either teacher or pupils remaining in it. The health of many teachers has thus been impaired. It is better to give such needed assistance before school, if this cannot be done in school hours.

Few devices for the punishment of children are more easily or more widely abused than the imposition of tasks. The most objectionable of these abuses is the assigning of school tasks, as writing words or sentences, solving problems, memorizing verses, etc., as a penalty for idleness, whispering, inattention, tardiness, etc.,—a practice already condemned. By a law of the mind, the punishment is associated, not with the offense (as it should always be), but with the task, thus increasing the pupil's dislike for it. No duty should ever be assigned as a penalty for misconduct. A child may be wisely required to make up a neglected duty as a necessary condition of future progress, and such a task may be imposed in case of culpable neglect and idleness. The principle to be carefully observed is that pain and loss should always be associated with the wrong done and not with duty. Blessings should be linked with virtuous conduct, and evil with wrongdoing, as Siamese twins.

The
imposition
of tasks

XXV

NEEDLESS DENIALS*

HELEN HUNT JACKSON

Author of "Ramona"

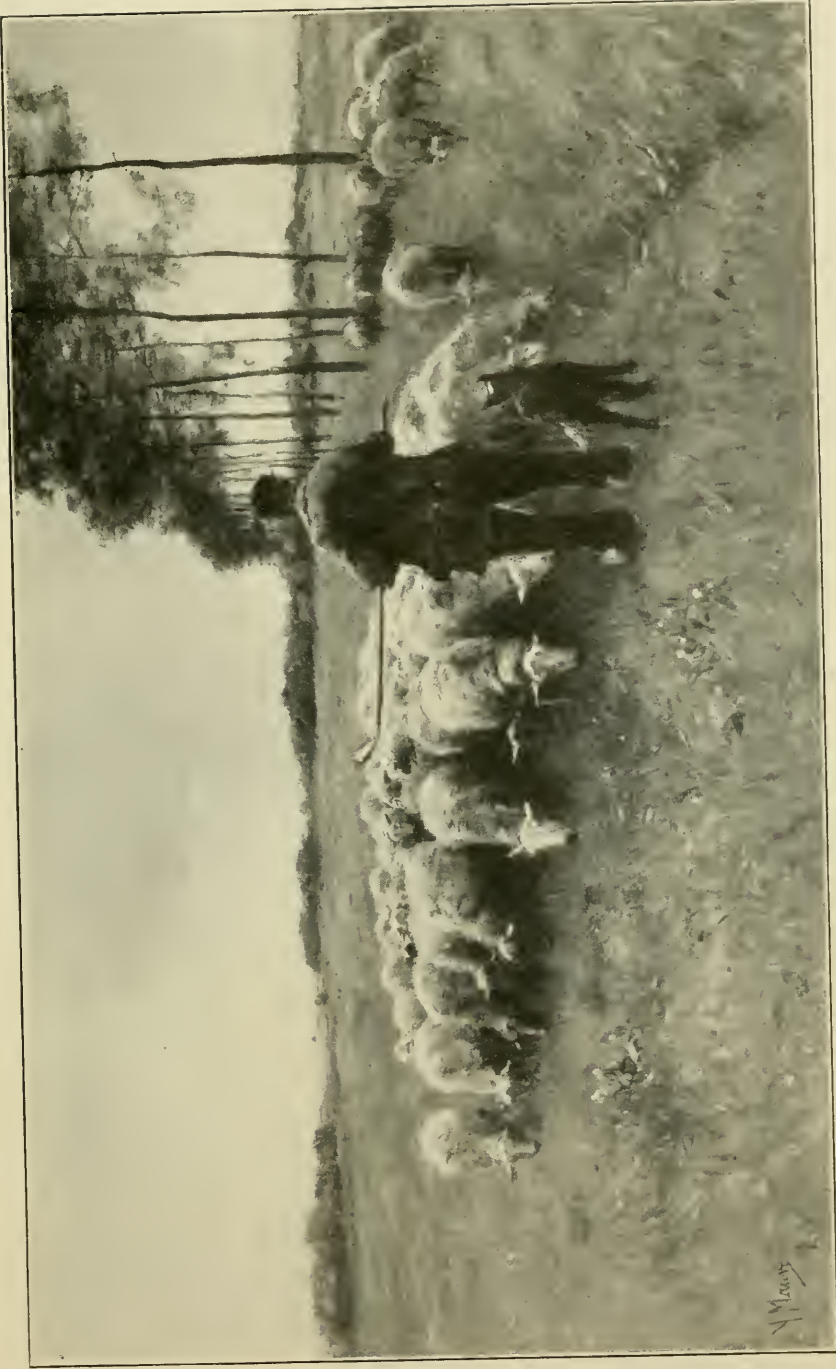
Fathers and
mothers
habitually
inhumane



EBSTER'S dictionary, which cannot be accused of any leaning toward sentimentalism, defines "inhumanity" as "cruelty in action"; and "cruelty" as "any act of a human being which inflicts unnecessary pain." The word inhumanity has an ugly sound, and many inhuman people are utterly and honestly unconscious of their own inhumanities; it is necessary therefore to entrench one's self behind some such bulwark as the above definitions afford, before venturing the accusation that fathers and mothers are habitually guilty of inhuman conduct in inflicting "unnecessary pain" on their children, by needless denials of their innocent wishes and impulses.

Most men and a great many women would be astonished at being told that simple humanity requires them to gratify every wish, even the smallest, of their children, when the pain of having that wish denied is not made necessary, either for the child's own welfare, physical or mental, or by circumstances beyond the parent's control. The word "necessary" is a very authoritative one; conscience, if left free, soon narrows down its boundaries; inconvenience, hindrance, deprivation, self-denial, one or all, or even a

*From "Talks About Home Matters," by permission of Little, Browne & Co.



SPRING

After the Painting by Anton Mauve.
In the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

great deal of all, to ourselves, cannot give us a shadow of right to say that the pain of the child's disappointment is "necessary." Selfishness grasps at help from the hackneyed sayings, that it is "best for children to bear the yoke in their youth;" "the sooner they learn that they cannot have their own way the better;" "it is a good discipline for them to practice self-denial," etc. But the yoke they *must* bear, in spite of our lightening it all we can, is heavy enough; the instances in which it is, for good and sufficient reasons, impossible for them to have their own way are quite numerous enough to insure their learning the lesson very early; and as for the discipline of self-denial—God bless their dear, patient souls!—if men and women brought to bear on the thwartings and vexations of their daily lives, and their relations with each other, one hundredth part of the sweet acquiescence and brave endurance which average children show, under the average management of average parents, this world would be a much pleasanter place to live in than it is.

Let any conscientious and tender mother, who perhaps reads these words with tears half of resentment, half of grief in her eyes, keep for three days an exact record of the little requests which she refuses, from the baby of five, who begged to stand on a chair and look out of the window, "No, it would hurt the chair," when one minute would have been enough time to lay a folded newspaper over the upholstery, and another minute enough to explain to him, with a kiss and a hug, "that that was to save his spoiling mama's nice chair with his boots;" and the two minutes together would probably have made sure that another time the dear little fellow would look out for a paper himself, when he wished to climb

A day's
record of
mother's
denials

up to the window—from this baby up to the pretty girl of twelve, who, with as distinct a perception of the becoming as her mother had before her went to school unhappy because she was compelled to wear the blue necktie instead of a scarlet one, and surely for no especial reason. At the end of the three days, an honest examination of the record would show that full half of these small denials, all of which had involved pain, and some of which had brought contest and punishment, had been needless, had been hastily made, and made usually on account of the slight interruption or inconvenience which would result from yielding to the request. I am very much mistaken if the honest teaching and honest study of such a three days' record would not wholly change the atmosphere in many a house to what it ought to be, and bring almost constant sunshine and bliss where now, too often, are storm and misery.

Refusal the
first impulse
of parents

With some parents, although they are neither harsh nor hard in manner, nor yet unloving in nature, the habitual first impulse seems to be to refuse; they appear to have a singular obtuseness to the fact that it is, or can be, of any consequence to a child whether it does or does not do the thing it desires. Often the refusal is withdrawn on the first symptom of grief or disappointment on the child's part; a thing which is fatal to all real control of a child, and almost as unkind as the first unnecessary denial—perhaps even more so, as it involves double and treble pains in future instances, where there cannot and must not be any giving way to entreaties. It is doubtless this lack of perception—akin, one would think, to color blindness—which is at the bottom of this great and common inhumanity among kind and intelligent fathers and mothers; an inhumanity so

common that it may almost be said to be universal; so common that, while we are obliged to look on and see our dearest friend guilty of it, we find it next to impossible to make them understand what we mean when we make outcry over some of its glaring instances.

You, my dearest of friends—or, rather, you who would be, but for this one point of hopeless contention between us—do you remember a certain warm morning, last August, of which I told you then you had not heard the last? Here it is again, perhaps in print I can make it look blacker to you than I could then; part of it I saw, part of it you unwillingly confessed to me, and part of it little Blue Eyes told me herself.

Her one
day's trials

It was one of those ineffable mornings, when a thrill of delight and expectancy fills the air; one felt that every appointment of the day must be unlike those of other days—must be festive, must help on the “white day” for which all things look ready. I remember how, like the morning itself, you looked as you stood in the doorway, in a fresh white muslin dress, with lavender ribbons. I said, “Oh, extravagance! for breakfast!”

“I know,” you said, “but the day was so enchanting, I could not make up my mind to wear anything that had been worn before.” Here an uproar from the nursery broke out, and we both ran to the spot. There stood little Blue Eyes, in a storm of temper, with one small foot on a crumpled mass of pink cambric on the floor; and nurse, who was also very red and angry, explained that Miss would not have on her pink frock because it was not quite clean. “It is all dirty, mama, and I don’t want to put it

on! You've got on a nice white dress; why can't I?"

You are in the main a kind mother, and you do not like to give little Blue Eyes pain, so you knelt down beside her, and told her that she must be a good girl, and have on the gown Mary had said, but that she should have on a pretty white apron, which would hide the spots. And Blue Eyes, being only six years old, and of a loving, generous nature, dried her tears, accepted the very questionable expedient, tried to forget the spots, and in a few moments came out on the piazza, chirping like a little bird. By this time the rare quality of the morning had stolen like wine into our brains, and you exclaimed, "We will have breakfast out here under the vines! How George will like it!" And in another instant you were flitting back and forth, helping the rather ungracious Bridget move out the breakfast table with its tempting array.

"Oh, mama, mama," cried Blue Eyes, "can't I have my little tea set on a little table beside your big table? Oh, let me, let me!" and she fairly quivered with excitement. You hesitated. How I watched you! But it was a little late. Bridget was already rather cross; the tea set was packed in a box, and up on a high shelf.

"No, dear. There is not time, and we must not make Bridget any more trouble! but"—seeing the tears coming again—"you shall have some real tea in papa's big gilt cup, and another time you shall have your tea set when we have breakfast out here again." As I said before, you are a kind mother, and you made the denial as easy to be borne as you could, and Blue Eyes was again pacified, not satisfied, only bravely making the best of it. And so we had our

breakfast; a breakfast to be remembered, too. But as for the "other time" which you had promised to Blue Eyes; how well I knew that not many times a year did such mornings and breakfasts come, and that it was well she would forget all about it! After breakfast—you remember how we lingered—George suddenly started up saying, "How hard it is to go to town! I say, girls, walk down to the station with me, both of you."

"And me, too, me, too, papa!" said Blue Eyes. You did not hear her; but I did, and she had flown for her hat. At the door we found her, saying again, "Me, too, mama!" Then you remembered her boots: "Oh, my darling," you said, kissing her, for you are a kind mother, "you cannot go in those nice boots; the dew will spoil them; and it is not worth while to change them, we shall be back in a few minutes."

A storm of tears would have burst out in an instant at this third disappointment, if I had not sat down on the doorstep and, taking her in my lap, whispered that auntie was going to stay, too.

"Oh, put the child down, and come along," called the great, strong, uncomprehending man—Blue Eyes' dear papa. "Pussy won't mind. Be a good girl, Pussy; I'll bring you a red balloon tonight."

You are both very kind, you and George, and you both love little Blue Eyes dearly.

"No, I won't come. I believe my boots are too thin," said I; and for the equivocation there was in my reply I am sure of being forgiven. You both turned back twice to look at the child, and kissed your hands to her; and I wondered if you did not see in her face, what I did, real grief and patient endurance. Even "The King of the Golden River" did not rouse her; she did not want a story; she did not

want me; she did not want a red balloon at night; she wanted to walk between you, to the station, with her little hands in yours! God grant the day may not come when you will be heartbroken because you can never lead her any more!

She asked me some questions, while you were gone, which you remember I repeated to you. She asked me if I did not hate nice new shoes; and why little girls could not put on the dresses they liked best; and if mama did not look beautiful in that pretty white dress; and said that, if she could have only had her own tea set at breakfast, she would have let me have my coffee in one of her cups. Gradually she grew happier, and began to tell me about her great wax doll which had eyes that could shut; which was kept in a trunk because she was too little, mama said, to play very much with it now; but she guessed mama would let her have it today; did I not think so? Alas! I did, and I said so; in fact, I felt sure that it was the very thing you would be certain to do, to sweeten the day, which had begun so badly for poor little Blue Eyes.

It seemed very long to her before you came back, and she was on the point of asking for her dolly as soon as you appeared; but I whispered to her to wait until you were rested. After a few minutes I took her up to your room—that lovely room with the bay window to the east; there you sat, in your white dress, surrounded with gay worsteds, all looking like a carnival of humming birds. “Oh, how beautiful!” I exclaimed, in involuntary admiration; “what are you doing?” You said that you were going to make an afghan, and that the morning was so enchanting you could not bear the thought of touching your mending, but were going to luxuriate in the worsteds. Some

time passed in sorting the colors, and deciding on the contrasts, and I forgot all about the doll. Not so little Blue Eyes. I remembered afterward how patiently she stood still, waiting and waiting for a gap between our words, that she need not break the law against interrupting, with her eager—

“Please, mama, let me have my wax dolly to play with this morning! I’ll sit right here on the floor, by you, auntie, and not hurt her one bit. Oh, please do, mama!”

You mean always to be a very kind mother, and you spoke as gently and lovingly as it is possible to speak when you replied:

“Oh, Pussy, mama is too busy to get it; she can’t get up now. You can play with your blocks, and with your other dollies, just as well; that’s a good little girl.”

Probably, if Blue Eyes had gone on imploring, you would have laid your worsteds down and given her the dolly; for you love her dearly, and never mean to make her unhappy. But neither you nor I were prepared for what followed.

“You’re a naughty, ugly, hateful mama! You never let me do *anything*, and I wish you were dead!” with such a burst of screaming and tears that we were both frightened. You looked, as well you might, heartbroken at such words from your only child. You took her away; and when you came back, you cried, and said you had whipped her severely, and you did not know what you should do with a child of such a frightful temper.

“Such an outburst as that, just because I told her, in the gentlest way possible, that she could not have a plaything! It is terrible!”

Then I said some words to you which you thought were unjust. I asked you in what condition your own

nerves would have been by ten o'clock that morning if your husband (who had, in one view, a much better right to thwart your harmless desires than you had to thwart your child's, since you, in the full understanding of maturity, gave yourself into his hands) had, instead of admiring your pretty dress, told you to be more prudent, and not put it on; had told you it would be nonsense to have breakfast out on the piazza; and that he could not wait for you to walk to the station with him. You said that the cases were not at all parallel; and I replied hotly that that was very true, for those matters would have been to you only the comparative trifles of one short day, and would have made you only a little cross and uncomfortable; whereas to little Blue Eyes they were the all-absorbing things of the hour, which, to a child in trouble, always looks as if it could never come to an end, and would never be followed by anything better.

“It were
better that a
millstone”

Blue Eyes cried herself to sleep, and slept heavily till late in the afternoon. When her father came home, you said that she must not have the red balloon, because she had been such a naughty girl. I have wondered many times since why she did not cry again, or look grieved when you said that, and laid the balloon away. After eleven o'clock at night, I went to look at her, and found her sobbing in her sleep, and tossing about. I groaned as I thought, “This is only one day, and there are three hundred and sixty-five in a year!” But I never recall the distorted face of that poor child, as, in her fearful passion, she told you she wished you were dead, without also remembering that even the gentle Christ said of him who should offend one of those little ones, “It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were drowned in the depths of the sea.”

TRAINING BY WORK

QUOTATIONS

"It is very difficult to interest little folks in the neighborhood in the homely, however commendable, task of assisting in the household duties when one 'looked up to' and admired child in that community 'doesn't have to do anything.' Even the best trained ten year old will become strangely supercilious and patronizing when required to take any part in dishwashing or dusting if one infant is waiting in beautiful idleness for her to come out and play.

"The dignity of work, the splendid capability of those who do it well, and the joy of it can be taught even to the younger folk."—*Harper's Bazaar*.

"Idleness is the badge of gentry, the bane of body and mind, the nurse of naughtiness, the stepmother of discipline, the chief author of all mischief, one of the seven deadly sins, the cushion upon which the devil chiefly reposes, and a great cause not only of melancholy, but of many other diseases; for the mind is naturally active, and if it be not occupied about some honest business, it rushes into mischief or sinks into melancholy."—*Burton*.

"Drudgery is that which one subconsciously knows one is doing badly."—*Ellen Richards*.

"Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom from bad habits and the establishment of good ones."—*Della T. Lutes*.

XXVI

DANGERS OF IDLENESS

BENJAMIN B. LINDSEY

Juvenile Court Judge, Denver, Colorado



FIRMLY believe in work even in childhood. By this, I mean the right kind of work. It is not so much a question of work as the amount of work, the kind of work, and the conditions under which that work is performed. This need not lessen our belief in happiness in childhood. I want to say very candidly, that there are a great number of children in this country from fourteen years of age upward about whom I feel more alarmed at their failure to do or to know how to do any kind of useful work than of any possibility of their being overworked.

More danger
in idleness
than in
overwork

In our zeal for the protection of our boys subjected to extreme or unnatural conditions, we must not lose sight of the dangers and difficulties of idleness. There are thousands of boys in the cities of this country who, if not employed at some useful thing, are generally on the streets or in the alleys, in the downtown public pool rooms and bowling alleys, engaged not always in wholesome play, but too often in idling, cigarette smoking and dirty story telling, with absolutely no thought of work or the serious side of life. They are too constantly occupied with thoughts of "having a good time," and some rather perverted notions of what a good time is. Too many of our boys especially reach the age of moral and legal responsibility without the slightest conception

Too many
boys have no
conception
of work

of work. They are too often more concerned as to how much they earn than how well they do their work. In dealing with a certain class of youth in the juvenile court, I say without hesitation that the most hopeless fellow in the world is the boy who will not work—the boy who has not learned how to work, or the value and importance of work. There is always hope for the boy who works, especially the boy who likes to work.

Strenuous
life safest

I believe in the “strenuous life,” and I think its importance should be taught our boys and girls at an early age. There are too many young people in this country looking for “the life of ignoble ease.” I can say all of this to persons sincerely interested in the protection of the children from degradation or unnatural labor, and yet not be understood as depreciating the importance of wise child labor laws and their rigid enforcement for protection of the children of the Union. But we must be careful, in doing this, never to underestimate the importance of work—the right kind of work, a certain amount of work—in the life of every child, and especially that teaching which inculcates good impressions in the life of every child as to the necessity and importance of labor. On the other hand, my experience is that most boys will work if given any kind of an encouraging opportunity.

Lack of
chances

The lack of a chance is often responsible for idleness. At least ninety per cent of our boys and girls are forced out of the grammar school to fight the battles of life. They must have a chance to earn a living under such reasonably favorable conditions as not to destroy all chance of happiness or else they must become idlers and loafers. My own experience is that our common school education too often fails to equip them for earning more than the most scanty

wages. An opportunity between the sixth and eighth grades in our city schools for children of the toiling masses to learn some kind of useful trade or valuable work with the hands—to learn to do what their fathers do—is a reform in our educational system which the champions of child labor must, in my opinion, espouse if they would round out a systematic and consistent plan of battle in this fight for the salvation of the children.

Places for
the boys

I want to see the time come in this country when a boy of fourteen years of age up may be a valuable help to the plumber, the carpenter or the printer at a decent wage, instead of going to the messenger service and the street. I do not believe that juvenile labor should trespass upon the legitimate occupations of men and women, but we must equip these children for some kind of industrial efficiency and usefulness, or enlarge our reformatories and prisons for their care and maintenance. One of the saddest things in my experience as judge of the juvenile court has been the little fellows who have requested me to send them to the reform school in order that they might learn a trade. The principal of a school once said to me: "Judge, why don't you send that boy to the reform school so that he can learn a trade?" On behalf of the boy, I replied: "In God's name, why don't you people on the Board of Education give him an opportunity to learn a trade at home?"

Is it fair?

I ask you, is it fair, just or decent that in most of the cities of this country an American boy has no opportunity to learn a trade, to capacitate himself for joyous, useful work with his hands, unless he commits a crime? And yet, I am compelled to say to you that such is the condition in a very large section of this country.—[*From the Report of the Conservation Congress.*]

XXVII

THE EDUCATIVE VALUE OF WORK

EUGENE DAVENPORT

Dean of Department of Agriculture, University of Illinois



OT all education comes from books, indeed the best training is realized when the student digs out his own information from the materials that lie about him. Hence the popularity and the well recognized merits of the laboratory system of study.

Not all education has for its principal object the information of the student, or even the formal training of his mind. There remain outside of the purely intellectual objects of education, certain other purposes equally important. One of these is manual skill; another is a realization that life and civilization are and must be sustained by labor; still another is a consciousness of personal responsibility for assuming and not shirking a reasonable share of the world's work; and last of all, executive ability in the actual accomplishing of things undertaken.

Any system of education which fails to secure these results is by that much faulty. It deprives the child of some things to which he is entitled and which he will need in after life, and may endanger the community by throwing many children upon the world either unwilling or unable to do their share in advancing or even sustaining the standard of civilization that has been attained by so much expenditure and hardship.



A YOUNG WOMAN OPENING A CASEMENT

After the Painting by Johannes Vermeer.
In the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Formerly children grew up in the family. What education they got was by association with their elders day by day in needful work, and while this education was grossly defective from the standpoint of information, it was extremely effective in creating skill and executive ability and in stimulating ambition in the children as they gradually assumed the responsibilities of adults.

Former
education in
the home

Now, wherever the labor of the children can be spared, even through pinching self-denial at home, they are taken out of the family and put into school, freed from most responsibilities except getting their lessons, and after eight, twelve or twenty years of this experience, we wonder why so many prove inefficient after so long and laborious a preparation for life, and why so many of the best and most ambitious leave the school before it has fairly begun to do its proper work.

Present
methods

The truth is that we should be surprised at neither fact. The school was organized to impart information, and, whatever we may hold as to the correct philosophy of education, little more has been done up to date than to instruct the child how to amass information and how to acquaint himself with the facts and principles of life. He has not acquired either skill or experience in actually doing any part of the world's work, which he would have acquired if he had not gone to school. The result is that he either leaves school under an overmastering desire to "do things," or he smothers the passion and remains, with the certainty that under these conditions he will be compelled, after his schooling is completed, to undergo a long and perhaps a galling apprenticeship in acquiring those phases of education which schools have

not given and which are in many cases really child's work.

Suggested
remedies

The schools have quite generally recognized this defect, and the largest questions in education today concern possible methods of correcting the evil, and, to some extent at least, repairing the damage that is inevitable when children are taken so wholly from home and so completely from association with their elders as has come to be the fashion. The repair will proceed along two general lines: First, the introduction into the schools of vocational courses, thus stimulating ambition and giving at least some initial training; and, second, credit allowance by the school for daily work done at the home or other place of real adult activity. Until this time comes, however, and to some extent for all time, parents should be keenly alive to the educative value of daily work at even the most common things, this value being, as has been said, the acquisition of manual skill, the stimulation of ambition, the development of executive ability, and the awakening of a conscious responsibility for assuming a reasonable share of the world's needful work.

The best
ambition and
success

So much is said in school about "careers," and so much attention is given to men who have done some unusual act, that children and often the teacher and parents themselves fail to remember that the great thing in the world, and the great ambition for all people, is to do the ordinary things better than they have been done before. To build a better bridge, to design a better home, to bake a better loaf, or, as Emerson said, to invent a better mouse-trap than has been known before,—these are the things to aim at. The so-called great things are no greater than these common things; they are only unusual in their occur-

rence. What is of vastly more importance is the fact that all the men who have achieved exceptional things are those who had been both skilled and faithful day by day in the common things, which after all are most difficult.

All the world rang with the achievement of Dewey at Manila Bay, but it forgot that he was within a few months of retirement after a lifetime of ordinary service on the sea, except for which he would not have been ready for the job that morning. Abraham Lincoln is now almost deified, but he got his training as a rail splitter and a country lawyer, and it must not be forgotten that he was good at both. His real glory did not come until after his death, and he did not begin the work that led to it until he was very near the end of his life. Florence Nightingale was world famous as a nurse in the Crimea, but she was first faithful as a common nurse and housekeeper. The one who tries to achieve notoriety by overleaping the usual and aims at the unusual by neglecting to acquire skill in the most common things, will most likely live his life out waiting for the coming of the opportunity he seeks, or if it appears, it will come suddenly, as it always does, and catch him both unawares and unprepared.

More specifically, what are the direct educative results of that kind of work which consists of the ordinary daily duties of life? These results have been roughly sketched as four: namely, manual skill, a consciousness of the fundamental need for labor, a willingness to assume one's share of this labor, and executive ability in bringing things to pass.

All these effects are capable of considerable expansion, which may result in a better understanding of their significance.

Educative
results of
ordinary
duties well
performed

Manual skill

The value of securing a high degree of control over the operations of the hand, and of acquiring deftness of touch cannot be over-estimated. To be awkward through life is to be deprived of the best use of that most remarkable of gifts, the human hand. We train all other parts of the body by systematic athletic exercise, but the hand, which is capable of the highest development of all our physical parts, can be developed only by the greatest variety of exercise, begun in early life. The hand is not only a delicate organ but it is remarkable for strength as well. Many people develop one or the other; few develop both these faculties.

To accomplish this, the exercise must begin early in life and be both varied and continuous. The horse-man, desiring to develop an exceptional specimen, begins in colthood and "works" him every day. So the child which is to have serviceable hands must begin early, and the exercise should be varied and of such character as to develop both strength and delicacy of touch. Experience has shown that a reasonable amount of the one is not inconsistent with the other. The boy may handle the hammer and the saw, the plow and the reaper, without destroying his touch upon the violin, and the girl may cook and clean and be none the worse for the piano; indeed, each will help the other.

A consciousness of the fundamental need for labor

Experience shows that thousands of very excellent people undertake to go through the world upon the assumption that labor can be ignored. They seem to assume that learning is in some way an offset or an alternative for labor; indeed, many teachers inspire their pupils by the false ambition of getting a learning "so you won't have to work." Parents are not blameless in this matter, for most fathers and mothers

say, "I don't want my children to work as hard as I did."

Why not, pray? Labor is the price of our civilization, and the price of a higher civilization is more labor—just common drudgery, if you please to call it such; for, though the time should come when every man and woman is a college graduate, we shall still have to plow and sow and reap, and dig and build and manufacture; we shall still have to cook and clean and to care for the infant and the ill. The world of man is held together by work, and there will never be less of it. Man departed first from the beasts in his ability to work; and the first point of difference between the savage and the civilized is in his willingness to do it. This fundamental lesson can be learned only by daily experience beginning in childhood, for if learned by force in later years it leads only to a hard and resistant surrender to the inevitable, and not to that joyous exercise of the working powers which is the privilege only of the well educated human being.

The willingness to work, which is against the instincts of primitive men and of all animals, who live only to eat, sleep and play—this willingness, ripening into eagerness to do things, is, like any other acquired faculty—a habit that must be learned. It will not grow of itself like the hair; like the musical faculty, it needs developing by practice. Parents compel their children to spend one, two or three hours at the piano in the hope that they will learn to play, but seem to assume that when the time comes they will take naturally to the infinite variety of difficult duties, most of which we assume by nature about as reluctantly as the average child settles down to a two-hour drill at

A willingness
to assume a
fair share of
responsibility
for work

the piano. Let us be as consistent at the one point as at the other.

Executive
ability

There is a difference between doing things as separate units, and making them come out as a whole. It is one thing to make coffee, or cake, or even bread; it is another to have them come out, together with other things, as a full meal, and it is still another to have them all ready and hot at a particular stroke of the clock. It is one thing to raise corn, or to drive a horse, or even to care for his shoulder when he is at work; it is another to raise corn with other crops and cattle in such a way as to operate a farm and thereon establish a family, and feed, clothe, shelter and educate it. This difference, this "making things come out" is executive ability and it comes only of long practice.

Experiment-
ing with
success and
failure

I add a fifth effect which is a kind of resultant of them all, namely, *experimenting with success and failure*. If a boy sets out to make a box, it seems dead easy. He has only to nail together five pieces of board with the sixth as a cover. But he finds upon trial that the trick consists in sawing the boards both straight and square and in holding them true while the nails are driven in. He will do well if his first box will hold cobblestones, but after he has failed and failed and failed, till he has failed times enough, he will get so much skill and ability as to be able to make a box that looks something like what he has seen come from the hands of others. This is the only way in which he learns the real difficulty in doing even ordinary things, but what is more important, he has learned the price to be paid in turning failure into success.

Such a boy will not be discouraged when he later attacks the harder problems of real life; and he has

learned it all at the cost of a little cheap lumber and a few nails in a very brief period of child life, when time is of slight consequence. If he waits to learn on how narrow a margin success turns, until his life career and not a box is at stake, he will fail, of course, and having never failed in little things quickly over, he will face failure after perhaps years of what was to him faithful effort. Life is too short to repeat many of this kind of failures, and the stake is too heavy. It is little wonder that such a man forms a habit of failing and ultimately counts life itself a failure.

XXVIII

ERRORS IN HABIT FORMING

STUART H. ROWE, PH. D.

Author of "Habit Formation"

What
habit is



IF you have ever tried to button a button that wasn't there—if you have ever caught yourself shaking hands again with a person already greeted once—if you have ever seen grandma hunting her spectacles while they reposed serenely on her forehead, you know what habit is. Habit is an internal prompter. When it is time to make a move in a certain direction, the move is made before you know it. But the habit always represents an oft repeated act done in an oft repeated fashion. We are relieved of the necessity of thinking and our conscious thoughts may therefore be devoted to more complicated doings. Young children have relatively few habits, either good or bad. They have instinctive tendencies and modes of action. They imitate, but that is instinct. They play,—that is instinctive. But the particular play recurring frequently under similar circumstances is habit. The adult, on the contrary, is bound up in habits. All of his actions are permeated with habits,—some helpful, some harmful.

There are three errors in our formation of habit which are due to failure to appreciate its fundamental character:

1. It is a fundamental error to think that knowledge or theory necessarily results in practice. It doesn't. Witness all the dreamers and seers whose visions never came true. Nature provides multitudes of ideas and thoughts for every seed of action which actually takes root and grows into a practice. Yet telling a child what he ought to do rather than leading him to do it and enjoy it, is the common method of church, home and school.

Theory
does not
necessarily
lead to
practice

2. It is a fundamental error to think that character is a by-product of study. "Let the child be sent to school and study" seems to be the prescription for his salvation regardless of the ideals of the school, the playmates met, or the subjects taught. Studies are regarded neither by teachers nor by parents as tools through which desirable habits underlying real worth and character are to be developed. Hence our elaborate state and city systems of examinations in different subjects with no provision for the test of faithfulness, industry, courage or reliability, which form the stated purpose of an education.

Character
not a
by-product
of study

3. It is a fundamental error to think that bread-and-butter earning power depends on scholarship. It isn't the students of the highest scholarship who will make the best business men, scholars, teachers or mothers. If they lack certain sterling virtues, their standing will be a very poor index of their probable success in life, though their very standing would seem to indicate the presence of these virtues to some extent at least. No kind of training—academic, scientific, vocational or practical—will avail without such fundamental habits as readiness to work, cheerfulness in work, acceptance of full responsibility, keenness to learn, regard for truth, care of health, organization or planning of work and purpose,—in short, eager

Earning
power
depends on
sterling
habits

service. You recognize the value of these virtues in your cook, your nurse, your children's teacher, your stenographer. Why should so many children be sent to the world's work with so slight an appreciation of these qualities? Similarly, courses of study are filled up and requirements stiffened to the point where the habits underlying scholarship are lost sight of in the hurry and confusion of trying to cover the course of study and to prepare for the set examination. And worse than that, we herd children in mammoth buildings and large classes where the numbers a teacher deals with are a guarantee of his inability to give attention to the vital habits which should be the possession of each individual in varied degree. Nor can they be found by the simple and ordinary method of question and answer. They are only learned by the study of the individual.

Our
lack of
definite
ideas

Too often we fail to let a child know, even when we have picked out a definite habit for him to form, just what is desired. We should ourselves have to think hard sometimes to discover just what definite habits of service we wanted. It is not the form but the substance we are after. The French are the past masters of courtesy as exhibited in the outward act. Are they so conspicuous for the kindly internal attitude which is the essential of real courtesy? If you wish a child to accept responsibility, let him know when and how you expect it and commend him for such gratuitous interest as he may display at times, whether it is shown in diminishing the amount of gas or electricity used or in relieving the tired mother of the care of the baby.

Don't say to a child, "I want you to put your things away in their place," when you yourself have not been orderly enough to furnish a place or to help

the youngster to dispose appropriately of his belongings.

If you are one of those who believe that social and "white" departures from fact are justifiable, don't try to conceal that fact. You will certainly be discovered and all of your truth-telling set at naught. Tell the child what you believe the truth to be, when you do and when you don't tell it, and tell him what you expect of him.

If a child is to know just what is wanted, either you must show him yourself or he must try until you assure him he has found the way.

Man is moved to real exertion or continued effort in each case by some special incentive, interest, motive or inner influence which is at least a passion and may be a ruling passion. Napoleon had his military ambition; Washington, his patriotism; Lincoln, his sympathy for the downtrodden; Brooks, his ideals. The average man has his vocational and avocational interests,—his business and home interests. Features of these interests vital to one man may have a little effect on another. The child is developing these. The emphasis is still perhaps on the play interests. The stronger the emphasis, the more necessary it is that he be handled with that fact fully understood,—not that this active interest is to be thwarted, but rather that it is to be lured into new channels. One common mistake in dealing with the child is to ignore these special phobias, or tendencies, and therefore fail to show him their connection with habits to be formed. We try to develop a habit of cleanliness and take it for granted that the child will know why. Perhaps he would, if he stopped to consider the matter, but he usually has business of more importance. We are acting as unwisely and as unscientifically as we should if we wanted a garden and scattered seeds

A special
incentive
needed

over it, selected at random from a horticulturist's book regardless of soil, shade or climate. The instincts of imitation and play are all that save children from our stupidity in this particular. The children follow our suggestions through a natural spirit of investigation and sheer love of activity. But if effort is required for a period of time and little pleasure is involved, we shall have to find a more moving and enduring incentive.

Fear a
useless
incentive

It is an error to rely on vanity and fear rather than love and approval and courage. Punishment, corporal or other, is practically useless in connection with habit-forming. It discourages and deadens. Pride in genuine achievement is valuable, but in most of its forms it is too weak to overcome the discomfort of strenuous effort in an unappreciated direction. "Because I want you to" is far inferior to "Because we want to and I believe you can."

Ambition often runs counter to fair play. Too frequent appeal to ambition seems to imply that its dictates are always to have precedence. If the child can be led to be careful of his pocket money, not for what he can save up for himself but for the benefit of the family, a stronger and better motive has been used.

In general the higher motives are more compelling than the lower when applied to sustained action or practice, such as is necessary for habit. Condemnation and ridicule are poor substitutes for obligation and conscience. The former may seem more powerful at the moment, but they lack staying power.

Failure to
consider
individual
interests
and motives

Another fundamental error, dealing with the incentive to habit, lies in the failure to consider the individual interests and motives of each child. To attempt habit development without knowing the interests which guide his thinking with reference to choice

of associates, choice of study, or choice of work, is to pilot an automobile, at first sight, without the slightest knowledge of its construction or operation. It is either to go it blind or not to go at all. To know the child's instinctive tendencies, his motives, his special interests, is to have a whole scale of incentives through which noble harmonies may be played by him who knows the chords.

It is in this supplying of the motive that the hidden value of vocational training lies, if the child has a real interest in a vocation. Few parents, few teachers, realize the tremendous waste of school effort which comes from the lack of sufficient incentive to justify the effort required. The motive is clear to the teacher and to the parent, but the child, the one for whom this realization is most vital, has not been stirred. If, however, he is interested in a vocation and has an opportunity to apply himself to it, an assured motive is available.

Ordinarily we have tended rather wisely to pin our faith in forming habits to the principle,—“Practice makes perfect.” Our proverb, however, specifies neither the amount of practice nor the kind. And our errors in repetition thus hinge on these two points. Where the natural situation, as in lacing up one's shoes, secures adequate repetitions of an effective sort, nothing more is necessary. Where practice tends to be insufficient, it is desirable to appoint a distinct time, place, or number of repetitions. It is also necessary to develop an atmosphere favorable to the habit. If you wish the child to use his tooth brush, appoint the time, night and morning, and the place also. Have the tooth brush visible so that he will be reminded of his duty in that regard.

The resulting
waste of
effort

“Practice
makes
perfect”
conditioned

One
weakness
to guard
against

It often happens that the incentives necessary for sustaining practice fade out. They are not strong enough without being brought forward to overcome the dampening influence of unforeseen sacrifices, or discomforts, which become all too prominent in the course of practice. A boy will enter with *éclat* upon a scheme of practice which is soon forgotten and left unfinished. He needs commendation for his earnest effort, even though unsuccessful, and certainly not abuse for its inadequacy. He needs help at the difficult points, and not a cold abandonment at the time when his courage is faltering. Show him and encourage him. But don't, by misplaced sympathy, confirm him in his weakness, and never push practice to the point of complete discouragement. The mother had nearly reached this point when Johnnie's teacher sent him home with a polite note requesting more practice with soap and water. The reply came,—“Johnnie ain't a rose. Don't smell him. Learn him.”

The other difficulty with practice is its possible degeneration to mere form. But, if definite results must be reached, if standards must be attained, and if in general success is measured by accomplishment, careful and well considered effort is likely to permeate practice.

Hindrances
to fixing
habits

In spite of the inherent tendency of habits to become fixed, nature arranges forces in such curious combinations that the tendency is often overruled and would be oftener were we not on our guard. In the course of habit-forming these temptations come to the child with peculiar force and are especially mischievous, as every lapse does more harm than many repetitions can repair. A bag of sand at the proper point may, in the time of flood, save a levee, but a thousand repetitions may not offset the damage done

by one break in a nearly made habit. Exceptions are insidious. They creep in from unexpected quarters. A student should be on his guard against them, pledged against them, resolved against them. Any reminder such as a badge, button, etc., any words of approval, or other rewards, will help to protect him. Any helps to his imagination, so that he can be better fortified against the unexpected, should be given him. *We who have had experience can warn him against dangers he could not foresee and show him the directions from which they will come.*

Develop in him an ability to criticise his own acts and test his own proficiency. We let him lean on us, when he should as easily and even more effectively test himself.

Two more errors need our attention. We often need to divide up habits. Let the child learn one part; then another. We expect the same ability we should in an adult. It is hard even for parents to realize the immaturity of children and to refrain from crediting them with more than they know. Teachers do not so often do so because they see hundreds and even thousands (more's the pity) for every half dozen a parent sees.

Dividing
habits

The other error is in breaking habits. We try to produce the absence or negation of the habit. That is physiologically and psychologically impossible. The most we can do is to substitute another habit which will counteract the one to be broken. This substitute must be formed as other habits are, though with due regard for special difficulties, such as are inherent in the danger of lapse or exception. These are only overcome by the renewal or vivifying of incentive through sympathetic suggestion.—[*For a full discussion of habit formation see Dr. Rowe's book on that subject.*—ED.]

Habits not
breakable

XXIX

OBEDIENCE

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Means
long
preparation
for adult
life



OD blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, "Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. And the fear of you, and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered."

Man is thus given dominion over every living creature. He is the recognized "Lord of Creation." Among all the animals of the earth, he is the supreme one. Other animals have developed and progressed according to the law of natural evolution, but have gone no farther. Man has developed along the same lines, but has gone so far beyond other creatures that all progress the world has made outside of natural laws is due to him. Yet man, at his birth, is among the feeblest of all organized living creatures, having little instinct, and being almost wholly dependent on others to supply all his needs. In spite of this tremendous handicap he later on becomes chief of the animal world. Nature has provided a long period of years to reach maturity that he may have ample time and opportunity to develop his powers and adapt himself to his environment. To bring his life to its perfection requires a thousand-fold more intelligence than to educate and develop any other animal.



SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN
After the Painting by F. Von-Uhde.



While no moral quality can be attributed to the actions of very young children, their training into regular habits should begin early. Regularity of eating and bathing persisted in for a few years will form habits for life. The most important years are the earliest years, the years at home before school life begins. If the child is wisely guided and his awakening and enquiring mind given encouragement to investigate any and everything that will not harm him, he starts to school far ahead of the child who has never been encouraged to ask questions about the many strange and wonderful things everywhere about him. Some earnest teacher may, in after years, awaken such a neglected child's mind, but he will never be able to reach the development attained by the child reared under more favorable conditions.

Training
should be-
gin early

If young mothers only realized how important the first four or five years of life are to future growth and development, they would not be so impatient and hasty of sharp speech when annoyed by the child's persistent questioning. He wants to know things, and he can find out only by asking. One cannot always answer the questions satisfactorily, but the child need not be scolded or punished because he is an animated interrogation point. Curiosity is the great stimulus both in children and grown people.

Children's
questionings

The time to teach obedience is during these early years. Obedience is not a mental faculty that develops of itself. It must be taught. It is impossible to say at just what time one should begin to require obedience but it should begin before the child can either walk or talk. The longer it is delayed the harder it becomes.

Time and
method for
teaching
obedience

Teaching obedience does not require harsh measures. All one need do is to be firm and insist upon

obedience when once the requirement has been made. Some children will whimper, or cry, or even attempt to set themselves against parental authority, but if the parent insists firmly and quietly on implicit obedience, these children will, in time, give up all idea of disobedience. When a child learns that he must obey his father and mother when they speak to him, there will be little further trouble, unless the parents become lax in their methods.

The evils of
vacillation

It is the vacillating policy that spoils the child. Today certain things are required of him and he is punished if these things are not satisfactorily done; tomorrow, these same things may be done or left undone as the child wishes, and no notice is taken of the matter. Nothing could be more disastrous to discipline than this.

Some teachers govern in the same way. Today they are serene, gracious, easy to please; tomorrow, exacting, fault-finding, scolding from 9 o'clock until 4. The children under such a teacher are as skillful as Goldsmith's children in "The Deserted Village," and easily learn to read "The day's disaster in her morning face." At the close of such a day in the schoolroom both teacher and children are exhausted and discouraged. Little good has been accomplished; much harm done.

This is equally true in the home. If mother scolds continually today, life is almost unbearable for all members of the household. Only the thought that she will be easy to please tomorrow keeps their spirits from fainting under the lash. But why should such inconstant discipline be employed? It is absolutely ineffective, and children soon learn that it means nothing. Such parents and teachers always make complaint about the *bad* children, not realizing that it is the *governor* and not the *governed* who is bad.

That same complaint has always been made, not in families and schools only, but also in cities, states and nations. The people are always blamed for lack of obedience and submission to laws, when the real blame should be placed on the laws and those who make and enforce them. If parents and teachers would themselves learn the art of government, they would find the great majority of children willing and anxious to please by cheerful obedience.

Another serious obstacle to good discipline is refusing a child's request without having given it a moment's consideration, and then permitting the child to tease and beg until he gains his point. Some parents seem to think that the begging and teasing show that the child has strong will power, and since he wants a thing so strongly as to contend for it, he ought to have it. The child is simply "spoiled" by the parents' lack of judgment, and wants to have his own way. Later on, such a child will have many a hard struggle to submit when life refuses to bestow. It is a wiser plan to teach the child to understand that he cannot have all he asks for, and that he must endure his refusals without whining or rebelling.

It is well to have a plan in mind for training a child, and if the plan is carefully thought out, it should be adhered to as far as possible. Of course, one cannot always carry out, to the letter, any one plan. It will have to be modified from time to time, and whatever the plan both father and mother should agree on the essential points. When father thinks one way in regard to discipline and mother thinks differently, the children should not know it. Disaster will follow if father and mother are known to be at "outs" about raising the children. If the parents cannot agree, one should give up entirely for the chil-

Refusing
without
consideration

Having
a plan

dren's sake. Or they can effect a compromise, just as the state or nation does in outlining its plan of government. Many children have been "ruined" and made disobedient and deceitful by failure of parents to work together.

It is no easy task to educate a child. If a bad system is pursued both parent and child are cursed by it; but a good system blesses the one who teaches and the one who is taught.

The reward

It is too much to expect that all parents will be wise, intelligent, and faithful in rearing their children, or that all children will be truthful, industrious and obedient. No system could be devised by which every parent could be indoctrinated with a high degree of intelligence, goodness, and self-control, and if the parents have it not, neither can the children be expected to have it.

To the parents belongs the blame if the children are untaught and untrained, and to them belongs the great reward of noble and self-sacrificing lives,—children who grow to manhood and womanhood self-controlled, self-centered, useful citizens of a great nation.

MORALS



QUOTATIONS

"The question 'who is my neighbor?' implies group morality. It is impossible to develop universal morality in young children; the problem is to deepen their sense of right and wrong in regard to the small world in which they immediately live and in which they are interested. A sense of the brotherhood of man can be fully and effectively developed only in the relatively mature, not in children."
—*Thomas M. Balliet, Ph. D.*

"We have been requiring of all youth the fulfillment of standards of gentlemanly and lady-like conduct which have been clear, definite and detailed in our own minds, but which they in their limited experience have had no chance to appreciate—many of them not even to understand. This is an injustice to youth. They have a right to a complete explanation of the moral standards in vogue among adults to which adults are endeavoring to persuade and compel them to conform. By means of co-operation in moral education, the church, the home, and the school, entirely under independent management now, can foster and encourage the moral development of the nation's boys and girls. The result of this harmonious education of personal character will be unity and strength in the moral life of the nation. Upon this national strength of character can be built the future greatness of the nation."—*Milton Fairchild.*

"Nothing shall warp me from the belief that every man is a lover of truth. There is no pure lie, no pure malignity in nature. The entertainment of the proposition of depravity is the last profligacy and profanation. There is no skepticism, no atheism but that. Could it be received into common belief, suicide would unpeople the planet. It has had a name to live in some dogmatic theology, but each

man's innocence and his real liking of his neighbor, have kept it a dead letter."—*Ralph Waldo Emerson.*

"Ez fer war, I call it murder,—
There you have it plain an' flat;
I don't want to go no funder
Than my Testament fer that;
God has sed so, plump and fairly,
It's ez long ez it is broad,
An' you've got to git up airly
Ef you want to take in God."

—*James Russell Lowell.*

"The responsibility for the public and private morals of a community or nation must not be placed, as is the fashion, entirely upon the public school. The forces which make for morality or for immorality are numerous, and the school is only one of them. The home, the church, and society must share the responsibility with the school."—*Thomas M. Balliet, Ph. D.*

"The formulation of a method by which the children of the nation can be taught the sound principles of moral conduct which have been adopted by men and women of intelligence and common sense is vastly more important than the working out of a new method of instruction in mathematics or geography. It is a matter upon which the safety, honor, and welfare of our whole American people depend."

XXX

SOME DEFINITE NEEDS OF MORAL INSTRUCTION

PROFESSOR NORMAN COLEMAN

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IN every moral crisis two things are likely to be needed, light and power, the enlightenment of the mind and the strengthening of the will. That moral instruction as well as training is needed will be readily acknowledged. Probably all teachers have had to do with cases of petty thieving, lying, cheating, and private revenge where it was sadly evident that there was moral darkness as well as moral weakness. Boys and girls need to be taught to think right in moral crises as well as trained to do right; it would be folly to expect the one without seeking also the other.

Things
needed in
moral crises

Most people feel this great need of enlightening children's minds in matters of moral conduct, but they fear certain dangers in systematic moral instruction. If these could be provided against the way seems clear. In the first place, what is called "preaching" must be avoided. This I take to mean the dealing with moral questions externally and at long range, together with the raising of moral issues that are artificial in having no immediate relation to the children's experience. Whoever would guide the young out of moral darkness must be sensitive to peculiar needs of help and to recognize feeble or mistaken strivings after good; he must have trained in-

Things to
avoid

sight into young lives, and personal familiarity with the dispositions of the children to be instructed. In the second place, moral instruction, especially for younger boys and girls, must be concrete. Here above all,

"Truth in closest words may fail
While truth embodied in a tale
May enter in at lowly doors."

Young
children
not ready
for a study
of ethics

Young boys and girls are not ready for the study of ethics. To exercise their minds in making fine ethical distinctions will result in weariness, priggishness, or mere sophisticated cleverness. In the third place, practically all depends upon the teacher. As one of my correspondents says, "It is a farce for the teacher who shows dishonesty in little inter-school matters, for example athletics, who has incorrect habits, and who ridicules, scoffs at, or is indifferent to matters of religion or morality, a teacher who does not stand for pure manhood and womanhood, to attempt to gain moral advancement for his pupils." It seems sometimes that we must wait till we have better teachers before we can hope to have our boys and girls instructed in morals. Yet we know that to do this is to prevent all progress; for teachers are only grown-up pupils who carry into their present work some of the bad ways of thinking and doing that they learned in school. Dishonest teachers are, after all, relatively few, and in any case we must do the best we can with the kind of teachers we have, so that we may do better in the future.

Methods need
revision

Coming now to the ways in which we may achieve practical progress in the near future I have two suggestions to make. First, the subject matter and methods of our teaching in reading and history need

to be revised. To quote from another teacher, "More of the selections in our readers should stir up moral issues." Here is a great source of vital interest in literature; the deadening effect of selfishness in Macbeth appals, the charm of womanly truth and dignity in Portia enchants, and both are closely akin to moral processes that may be observed in neighbors and schoolmates. Our text books of history, too, can well afford to deal less fully with military tactics and lists of important dates, and more with worthy men and women in stress of action and strain of endurance. The kind of man Robert E. Lee was is more vitally significant than the way the opposing troops were ordered at Gettysburg.

Second, we need a standing committee of the State Educational Council on Moral Instruction which shall investigate and propose from year to year lines of progress in moral instruction and training. Such a committee should have a small appropriation each year for sending to all the teachers circulars of information, giving (for example) lists of "Supplementary readings with material for helpful discussions." Many teachers are ignorant of the material now available, and it is certain that in magazine and book form many valuable helps will be published from month to month and from year to year. Such a committee as I suggest could do much toward putting moral instruction in this state on a basis of systematic and progressive efficiency.

The following list of publications are reported as useful in moral instruction:

Useful
literature

Æsop's Fables, Black Beauty, Character Building, Ethics for Young People, Leaders of Men, Merry Animals, Moral Training for High Schools (published by the University of Wisconsin); Our Dumb

Animals, Pushing to the Front, System of Child Training (by Brownlee); Thompson-Seton Stories, The American Boy, The Little Colonel Series, The True Citizen, The Youth's Companion.—[*From "Religious Education."*]

XXXI

MUST YOUR CHILD LIE?

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OR one, I fear we have to answer this question affirmatively, although to approach it properly we must say that all depends upon how we define truth. If it is perfect conformity of statement with objective fact, there is a sense in which everybody always lies more or less, because even science has not yet attained absolute truth. But if we conceive lies as conscious and intentional departures from fact, I am inclined to believe that about all children sometimes lie; that not a few pass through a stage, often prolonged, when they prefer the lie to the truth, while in a few this trait persists through life.

Definition
of lying

When a boy of two or three rushes into the house with beaming eyes and says he saw a horse with one horn on his head, a dog as big as a house, or that God met him on the lawn and told him not to pick flowers, that he had been up to the moon—and these are real cases—he has perhaps just discovered, for the first time, that he can really say things that have no basis in reality. This marks the moment of the conscious birth of the imagination. The child is also gratifying his passion of exciting attention and arousing interest. Fancy in childhood is very vivid and inventive, and, probably, in our prosaic, matter-of-fact world, far more often needs a period of cultivation

The birth of
imagination

than repression. In the home and school games of "shut your eyes and tell me what you see" we often have, after a little practice, the most staggering Munchausen wonders or tales spun out of pure visual imagery that make the child first acquainted with the charm of his new found imaginative power—tales true not to things, but to thoughts, feelings, and wishes. The child is a poet, artist, romancer, and always has a larger fraction of belief in his reveries than adults have in theirs.

Imagination
in plays and
games

To a similar partial self-deception, plays and games owe very much of their charm. Children make believe, and a few think they are animals, soldiers, ogres. They play school, funeral, even that they are dead; they baptize cats, and play innumerable mimic rôles of every kind of occupation and industry. For children of idealistic temperament, imagination may become almost their very life. They are always acting parts, and many often as remote as possible from their actual lives. Such children are usually excelled in formal school work by those who have fewer original images of their own. This mytho-poetic power that may revel in the semi-plausible enables children to give a detailed setting to stories read or told to them. It is they who can tell the color of Barbara Frietchie's dress, the form of her caps, or in what kind of field the jin in the Arab tale arose out of the bottle. At ten or twelve such children often spin long yarns, sometimes continued from day to day, to the delectation of their mates. The early lives of geniuses like George Sand, Hartley Coleridge, Goethe and many others abounded in such fictions fondly elaborated.

Imaginary
companions

It is out of such dreamy stuff, too, that are made the imaginary companions of children, so many

of which have been recently studied, some of them persisting for years and having a biography and a definite character which profoundly influence the real child. Thus, dolls are great stimulators of fictitious imagination and are sometimes given histories and characters, while pets are endowed with nearly every human attribute. What would people be without this kind of mendacity? Such fancies are true to the nature and needs of the souls, if false to reality. They rarely amount to complete conviction, but often excite faint expectation, so that the wonder would be lessened if they all suddenly became true.

Now, there are some parents and teachers who are not entirely friendly to most of these salutary buds of art, literature, humanism generally; and yet more who think fairy tales, myths, and legends should be eliminated from children's education as being falsehoods. Their motto is, "Never teach anything that will later be known to be untrue," and they forget that nearly all the culture of the past and pre-scientific age was made up, warp and woof, of error and superstition, and that a child must repeat this stage in however abridged form, and cherish outgrown beliefs that lie so warm and close about the heart. Even Santa Claus, Jack Frost, the animal epics, and the marvelous and miraculous stories of the saints have their place, and it is too great repression in this field and excessive insistence upon literal veracity that make the cases of pseudophobia or haunting neurotic fear of deviating from the truth unawares.

Thus we meet not very infrequently with cases of children inflicted with such a horror of unconscious lying that they perhaps qualify every assent or negation with a whispered "I think" or "perhaps."

The morals
of it

An unhealthy
attitude

One boy had spells of praying a string of notes, and asking the good Lord to distribute them so as to neutralize the lies he might have unwittingly told in the past or might tell in the future. Another feared he might drop dead like Ananias any moment for an unconscious lie. As in barbaric ages a score of crimes are visited with the maximum penalty of death, so there is a stage where every deviation from truth may come to seem alike heinous. If this state takes root or develops, it may ripen into a habit of quibbling and word splitting or into a casuistic trial of sometimes quite systematized palliatives, tricks and evasions such as the crossing of fingers, making a distinction between acted and spoken lies, which may in the end become so effective as to admit and excuse falsehood. Happily this stage is usually fugitive, and most children realize in very tender years the distinction between intended and unintended mis-statements.

The primitive
rule of
conduct

Among savages and probably for long ages with primitive man, the ruling principle was the truth for friends or fellow clansmen, and the lie to aliens and enemies; and today the child has far less compunction in lying to a hated teacher, a stranger or a foe than to parents or confidants. All children find it far harder to cheat in their lessons with the teacher they like, while to simulate or dissimulate to the priest or above all to God is worst of all.

On the other hand, with waning attachment, promises weaken in their validity. Strange children and especially impertinent meddlers, may be told as a mental reservation, "I don't know," when what is really meant is "None of your business." Children may say they are not going to a place they intend to visit in order to avoid unwelcome company, and

may victimize an enemy by any lie or strategy they can invent. Rural children, who have longer and closer intimacies, are also more suspicious of strangers, and personal loyalty makes them believe that anything that pleases their idol is good or true. It is often hard for them to see wrong in lies that a parent or some good friend wished them to tell for their benefit. Personal fealty is very strong in children and is the bud of both patriotism and a sense of fidelity to God, but it takes a good deal of maturity to understand a truthfulness that is no respecter of persons. Thus, in treating the vice of falsehood in children we should, among other things, look well at their friendships and the character of their leaders and favorites, and not forget that those with bad friends are often worse off than those with none, and that they will be more true to great causes for having been faithful to dear and good friends. Close associations of all sorts thus involve actual trust, and the child who is at odds with most of those in his environment is peculiarly tempted to lie.

In a large group of cases lies are justified as means to noble ends. Children admire burly boys who, by false confessions, take upon themselves the penalties for sins of weaker playmates, or girls who, conscious of being favorites with teacher or parent or having superior powers of blandishment, come forward and falsely claim to be themselves the authors of the misdeeds of their less favored mates. Such situations are almost always approved, although often with some rather formal qualification. Children have a wholesome instinct for viewing moral situations in a general way, and can quite early feel the eager and sometimes often tragic interest that has always for all men invested those situations, whether in life or in litera-

The
justifying of
lies by noble
ends

ture, where duties seem to conflict. The normal child feels the heroism of sacrifice much earlier and more keenly than it can appreciate the sublimity of truth. A teacher told her class of twelve-year-olds the tale of a French girl in days of the Commune. When in the tumbril on her way to execution on a petty charge, the girl met her betrothed, who did not before know of her condemnation and responded to his agonized appeals, "Sir, I do not know you," passing on to death alone because she knew recognition would involve him in her doom. The teacher was saddened when she came to talk the story over with her pupils because it was so hard to make them name as a lie conduct that was eclipsed by heroism and love.

Theoretical or imaginary cases of this kind are often volunteered by children. They declare, for example, that they would say their mother was out, when she was really in, if it would save her life, giving quite a scenic background to such a possible occurrence, adding infrequently that this would not make it exactly right, though it would be their duty to do so, or that they would not tell a lie to save their own lives. A doctor, too, some suggested, might tell an overanxious parent or dearest friend that there was hope, easing his conscience, one added casuistically, by reflecting that there was woe on the part of the friend, although he himself had none.

In confronting such cases it is the conscientious parent or teacher who is most liable to get nervous and err. It is feared that, although the end may be very noble and the fib or quibble very petty at first, worse lies for less worthy objects may follow. The fondness and sometimes even exhilaration with which children describe such situations is interesting and seems due to a sense of easement from the tedious

and sometimes almost repressive sense of obligation to tell always the whole, exact, literal truth. They also enjoy such situations because under them lurks the half-conscious instinct to find in them the flavor of exculpation for more lies.

Another very important situation arises when children are called upon to tattle or tell of the misdeeds of their mates, to "snitch" or "peach." Fidelity to each other is the very basis of loyalty to friends, society, country, and to God. This is, perhaps, one of the tenderest points of honor of the most depraved street gamin. Moreover, he often has only too good grounds for fear of bodily violence. Even in the family, children often have a kind of freemasonry which makes it bad form to tell parents the misdeeds of each other. To avoid doing so, the lie is the easiest and readiest recourse. It is here that parents and teachers are often directly responsible for untruth, for to press for confessions is to present one of the strongest temptations to evasion and deceit, if not to direct falsehood. The same principle applies against too great intrusion into the private life of children. All who have studied them realize that there are masses of crude superstitions which they very early learn to repress; that a little later there are minor misdeeds and sometimes immoral habits that persistently seek refuge in the darkness of concealment. Every child needs to have a domain of life and experience all its own, sacred from intrusion; and the temptation of fond parents to maintain complete confidence with their growing boys and girls is met by a natural instinct of resistance on the part of the child which is often manifested by reservations, prevarications and, perhaps, by positive lies. Hence, a wise policy of letting alone and of seeming

to ignore, and the respecting the child's own personality as inviolable, removes another of the temptations to lie.

The usual
purpose of
children's
lies

Probably most, and certainly the worst, lies of children are to conceal and thereby escape the consequence, of their own misdeeds, or else to cheat and thereby gain an unjust advantage over others. There are endless confessions of deliberate miscounts in tallies, moving balls surreptitiously in croquet, crying out "no play" or "no fair" at critical moments to divert impending defeat, and false claims made to umpires. The passion to excel which is so potent in the young often makes them very unscrupulous about the truth. In high school and college games of all sorts, where picked players are pitted against each other and the prizes in local fame are great, dexterity in cheating or taking unfair advantage seems sometimes to be regarded almost as a legitimate qualification, the only discredit being, as with the lies which the Spartans were encouraged to tell, in the fact of discovery. These lies, prompted by excitement, are very easily forgotten when the excitement is over, so that they rarely rankle and are very hard to get at and sometimes seem almost unconscious.

School life
and methods
sometimes
responsible

School life and methods are responsible for some of this class of lies. For instance, the vicious system of self-reporting is a constant temptation to deceive. If children are pressed to tell a wrong they have done, they find lying a very easy way to get out. Very few will not give, and not many will refuse to take, prompts, or to peep in books, or cheat in examinations, especially if in danger of failure of promotion or of being dropped. Teachers are fair game. Children copy their school work, and monitors get others to do theirs for them as pay for not reporting

them. As school work is now done some of it can be bought and sold. I know city teachers who rewrite the English exercises of some of their pupils to be copied again by them before it is seen by the principal or examiner, excusing themselves by the fact that more than they can really do is now required of them. This, of course, is not a lesson in honesty to pupils.

Then, there is a long list of headaches, stomach-aches, nose bleeds feigned to excuse absence and tardiness. This class of lies eases children over many hard places in life, being convenient covers for weakness and even vice. To lie easily and skillfully is the child's way of escaping the restraints of the more or less artificial consequences attached by home and school to childish wrongdoing, while increased immunity always tends to further offense. Hence, it is plain that fear, especially of hard punishments or even censure, strongly tends to generate lying. If children know that their errors will be pardoned, they have less motive to cover them up. For a boy or a girl to come forward and confess a fault that will at once be visited with condemnation and perhaps blows when the child himself is not conscious of having done anything very wrong, is a good deal to expect in the tender years of life. Again, the school offers more immunity from detection in general than does the home, while a bad child, popular among his mates, has sometimes been known to set the fashion of habitual lies long persisted in. Excessive emulation and prizes are temptations, and should be reduced.

The results
of artificial
consequences
imposed

It should also be clearly seen that this class of lies is generally a peculiar form of self-indulgence and should often be treated as such rather than dealt with directly as lies. The bad habits they cover should

be patiently sought out and corrected, for it is doubtful whether any child ever learned to do ill habitually without at the same time learning to lie to conceal it. The sense of meanness this slowly causes has to be met by an appeal to honor, self-respect, and self-control. Everything that stimulates courage to face even hated tasks and rugged moral and mental regimen, and everything that gives the child resolution to meet difficulties indirectly favors honesty.

Pathological
lies

A Boston school girl of thirteen was taken sick with diphtheria, placed in a hospital, and in due time was well on the road to recovery, when a girl class-mate one morning brought the news that Mary had died very suddenly, reciting many circumstances and all with great detail, telling also how the funeral was to be conducted. Many pupils wept and in the afternoon brought one hundred and sixty-three pennies for flowers which the teacher sent with a note of condolence to the bereaved mother. On receiving it the mother called at the school in the greatest alarm and grief, but on telephoning to the hospital it was found that Mary was now well enough to come home that day. Guillimet reports the case of an imaginative girl of twelve who, on being reprimanded for bad work in school, excused herself by saying that a little sister had just been born at home, which, in consequence, was in confusion. The baby became the topic of conversation between the teacher and pupils for months. The details of its progress were reported, and it was carried through several infantile maladies. At last it died, and the pupil was excused to attend the funeral. Upon calling to express sympathy for the bereaved mother, what was the teacher's astonishment to learn that there had been no infant and so, of course, no disease or death! This child, eight years

later, became a remarkable spiritual medium. De-moor and Daniel report another girl of twelve who said her mother was very sick at home, and gave details. She grew steadily worse and at length died. After a few days the child returned to school weeping and clad in black. Some months later the father married again, and the child repeated the details of the wedding as she had done of the funeral of her mother. Some time afterwards it was learned that the mother of this child was still living with her father, that she had never been ill and nothing had happened.

Children often assume characters, especially on going to a new town or school and keep them up with difficulty by many false pretenses for a while. The assumptions are likely, however, in the end to become transparent and collapse, thus making the masquerader generally disliked and suspected. A few children, especially girls, become so honeycombed with morbid self-consciousness and affectation that they seem to have no natural character of their own, but are always acting a part to attract attention. Boys prefer fooling and humbugging by tricks or lies, sometimes of almost preternatural acuteness and cleverness. Several, for instance, combined to make an apparently complex instrument called an "electryzer." Boys not in the secret were told to press smartly the knob and they would get a shock, when they were pricked severely with a hidden pin. This is the diathesis that develops the hysterical passion for deceiving not only friends but others. The mind can really cause many diseases and these it can sometimes cure, so that it is on such patients that faith cures work their best miracles.

It is hard to believe that certain girls who seem honest and naive can relate long series of events which they know to be utterly false, or that the stimulus of a sharp break with truth or the love of lies for their own sake can be as strong as that for drink, quite apart from all the accessory motives of love of attention and of gain. Sometimes the instinct to lie and even to deceive self is an appetite indulged directly and against every motive of prudence and self-interest. A child cannot be false to others if true to self, and so he cannot experience the dangerous exhilaration of deceiving others without being in a measure his own victim and being left to believe his own lie. Such cases demand prompt and drastic treatment. If the withdrawal of attention and sympathy and credence does not suffice, and if stern reprimand fails, there is still the rod for certain cases, and if this fails the doctor should be called.

Boudin, Perez, Kemsies, and several other paidologists, believe that all children lie; some more, some less. Jean Paul declared that nothing the child said up to five years of age ought to be called either true or false—that this criterion should not be applied, in fact, save to older children.

How very imperfectly children's minds reproduce even the simplest objective events has been lately shown by very many carefully controlled experiments by Stern, Lobsein, Kosog, and many others. A typical case would be as follows: A simple picture is exposed for a given number of seconds, and each child is to write immediately afterwards a full description of the picture. These descriptions swarm with errors of omission, of insertion, and addition and of distortion. People standing are said to be sitting, colors, costumes, trees, bridges are invented or omitted or

Imperfection
with which
the child's
mind repro-
duces events

misplaced so that the veracity and completeness of the child's observation have been gravely called in question. From this point of view, we can see again how, from the adult standpoint of more acute observation and better knowledge of things, the child often has to lie from very error of observation.

One very general conclusion from all these studies is that children must have a rather active life and must see abundant events of a stirring character deployed before them. Their whole nature is tingling with vibrations of an ancient heredity in which are concentrated the whole experience of the race which is pressing on and up to repeat itself in them. They need an objective world, varied, large, and active enough to greatly absorb them, and then they will not need to improvise and create. On the other hand, the dull, uniform monotony of school life and lessons leaves not only an aching void, but a mass of surplus energy and craving in the child, so that it must often either resign itself to mental poverty or else expatiate far and wide and with considerable abandon into the world of shame in order to create the outside interests it does not find presented to it.

Again, parents persistently fail to realize that truth to the young child has very little relation to fact or to the objective world. It is simply loyalty to friends. What the adult would call a lie to save or shelter the feelings of a dear one is the highest expression of the instinct for veracity at a certain stage. In the teens, the best safeguard against the instinct of mendacity, which is so strong at this renaissance of the imagination, is the passionate love of knowledge. If active curiosity and deep mental interests and enthusiastic pursuit of truth are aroused, it is not only stranger but more interesting

Suggestions
for healthy
development

The child's
idea of truth

than all the fictions of the world, and the best of all safeguards is thus erected against lying. The teacher ought to cultivate and perhaps, if necessary, affect a passionate devotion to truth. She may, for the young children, almost cultivate a nimbus of infallibility. She should avoid every suspicion of casuistry, keep every promise and threat with the utmost fidelity, and thereby set a wholesome living example.—
[*From Appleton's Magazine, by permission.*]

XXXII

POSSIBILITIES OF BETTER MORAL LIFE

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St. Louis, Mo.



UNTIL recently, men have spelled evil with a capital E. They have regarded it as a metaphysical principle inwrought in the constitution of things, and consequently insuperable and eternal. Those who think in this way naturally assume the attitude of submission and resignation. The utmost they attempt is to palliate what they have no hope of being able to overcome. A more fruitful and hopeful view is now gaining acceptance. Evils are being dealt with in detail, their special causes are studied and, as they are discovered, controlled. We are actually making plants and animals, and shaping them to meet our needs. Write a prescription for a new kind of wheat suitable for a particular climate; you will find that your prescription can be filled. We can make new varieties of mice, guinea pigs, and sheep, and make them quickly. Mendelism, which has put these new powers in our hands, is a matter of the last two decades. No one can foresee what applied biology may do for our race in the future. One thing is sure. Species are not fixed, all forms are changing, and man can make over all that lives, including himself.

Modern view
of evil

Among savage peoples, the young are usually married as soon as they are nubile. Civilization brings with it a postponement of marriage, but to this change in our social arrangements there has been

Effects of
civilization
upon
marriage

no corresponding change in the constitution of man. One result is that the sex impulses ripen years before the family can be established. The difficulty thus arising is real, but by no means insuperable; for if our young men and maidens were properly taught, if they understood the situation, if high and pure ideals were nourished in them, the adolescent period would be passed with a minimum of catastrophe.

If our system of education were rational, if it were shaped less by tradition and more by the needs of human nature, our young people would not be left without guidance when their susceptibilities awaken, but the significance of their impulses would be explained. They would be made to realize that the sex instinct exists not merely for its own satisfaction, but points forward to parenthood and the continued life of the race. Moreover, the years intervening between puberty and marriage are not merely a time of peril, but also of precious opportunity. If the imagination and the heart are awakened while the impulses are controlled, the new energies overflow and are diffused through other parts of life. Before a mate is found who becomes the object of devotion, "the values evoked are dispensed over the world, the young person suddenly seems to have discovered a beauty and significance in many things; he responds to poetry; he becomes a lover of nature; he is filled with devotion or with philanthropic zeal."

Furthermore, these impulses, powerful as they are, are not solely responsible for the social evil with the misery which it brings in its train. Vice is largely due to false ideas and ideals which are perpetuated in our social tradition. The majority of the American people give their children no instruc-

By-products,
or the waiting
time

Race im-
pulses not
entirely
responsible
for wrong

tion concerning sex; that is, they send their boys and girls to get information from the most vulgar-minded and foul-mouthed of their playmates and schoolfellows. Among the untruths which youth acquire in this way is the doctrine of physical necessity for men. They also get the impression that the whole subject belongs, not in the realm of the sacred, but in that of the obscene. Were it not for such erroneous ideas and perverted ideals, the control of the impulse and its transmutation into the romance and idealism of normal youth would be a much less difficult task. It is not instinct so much as traditional habits of thought and feeling that must be changed. When the immoral silence and needless mystery have been done away with, and clear information and a correct emotional attitude have replaced the unclean mind and filthy imagination, the purely physical impulses will be seen to be surprisingly amenable to control.

Another discovery has recently been made which illuminates the whole situation and is profoundly encouraging. It has been found that vice in our great cities is not a necessary social phenomenon, deriving its inevitability from the unconquerable strength of passion, but that in its main aspects it is a commercialized business which is organized and promoted for the sake of gain. This is of capital importance. For it means that we are not in the position of having to fight nature or to deal with a volume of vice that is a fixed quantity upon which we can have no other effect than that of forcing it to change its location or its form. We have to do, in large part, with a disreputable business which flourishes only in concealment and which withers in the light. The facts cited by Mr. W. W. Hallam in his article in "Social Diseases" on "The Reduction of Vice in

Vice not
necessarily
a social
phenomenon

Certain Western Cities Through Law Enforcement," ought to be made known to every citizen in this country, as they render necessary a complete revision of the ideas which we strangely pride ourselves in cherishing without ever having studied the subject. He shows that whenever a city takes the profit out of vice it immediately reduces its volume, since this "varies greatly with the presence or absence of temptation or opportunity, and the character of the men in a city." During the recent police investigation in Chicago, "when two-thirds or more of the vice districts of the city were closed, the remaining one-third was greatly disappointed to find a falling off of business, instead of the increased amount they had expected."

Turning on
the light

Our task is now to turn on the light, exaggerating nothing, concealing nothing. When the public understands, it will act, and this hideous evil which has flourished for so many ages, will be reduced to much smaller proportions. Our work is to make the situation clear. Great practical measures are sure to be initiated and carried on in the near future. Our reliance is on educational methods, but uncalculating souls are sure to arise who will undertake heroic measures. I would not be surprised at any time to learn that some enthusiastic group has published the names of all the owners of property used for immoral purposes in some of the great cities. Indeed, such owners may suddenly find themselves prosecuted for their connivance at this infamous business, and confronted with evidence so convincing that neither their wealth and their political influence nor their social standing will avail to protect them from public indignation. We are not far from the time when the law will require that the names of the owner and the agent of every multiple house shall

be posted at the entrance or in the public hallway. Indeed, one of the greatest dangers confronting our movement is that enthusiasts may create a reaction by anticipating too much the development of public feeling.

Our own task is to guide the present hopeful movement as wisely as we can. It is worse than useless to get excited, or to engage in denunciation or exhortation. The public conscience can be awakened, not by eloquence, but by the perception of the real situation. When it is generally realized that prostitution, as a business, means not so much the sacrifice of degenerate women to natural impulse, as the entrapping of mere children by cold-blooded money-getters, toleration will cease, that business will be put under the ban, and the traffickers in little girls will be hunted like wild beasts from one end of the earth to the other.

The great work is to be done in the minds and hearts of men. There are to be some changes in our laws and social arrangements, but the change most needed is in our thoughts and ideals. The men of the near future will not only organize their industries, but they will make adequate provision for the satisfaction of the play instinct, the love of adventure, and the need of amusement and companionship after the tasks of the day are done. Life will be full of interests which will be formidable competitors of vice. Beautiful enjoyments will more and more displace frivolous and injurious pleasures in the leisure hours of each day. Above all, education will definitely aim to form the taste of the young in their earliest years. As their imitative instincts are at first extremely strong, they will be carefully guarded and prevented from witnessing scenes of vice. They will be so trained that the good will

Work in the
minds and
hearts of
men

seem to them to be natural and the bad will appear strange.

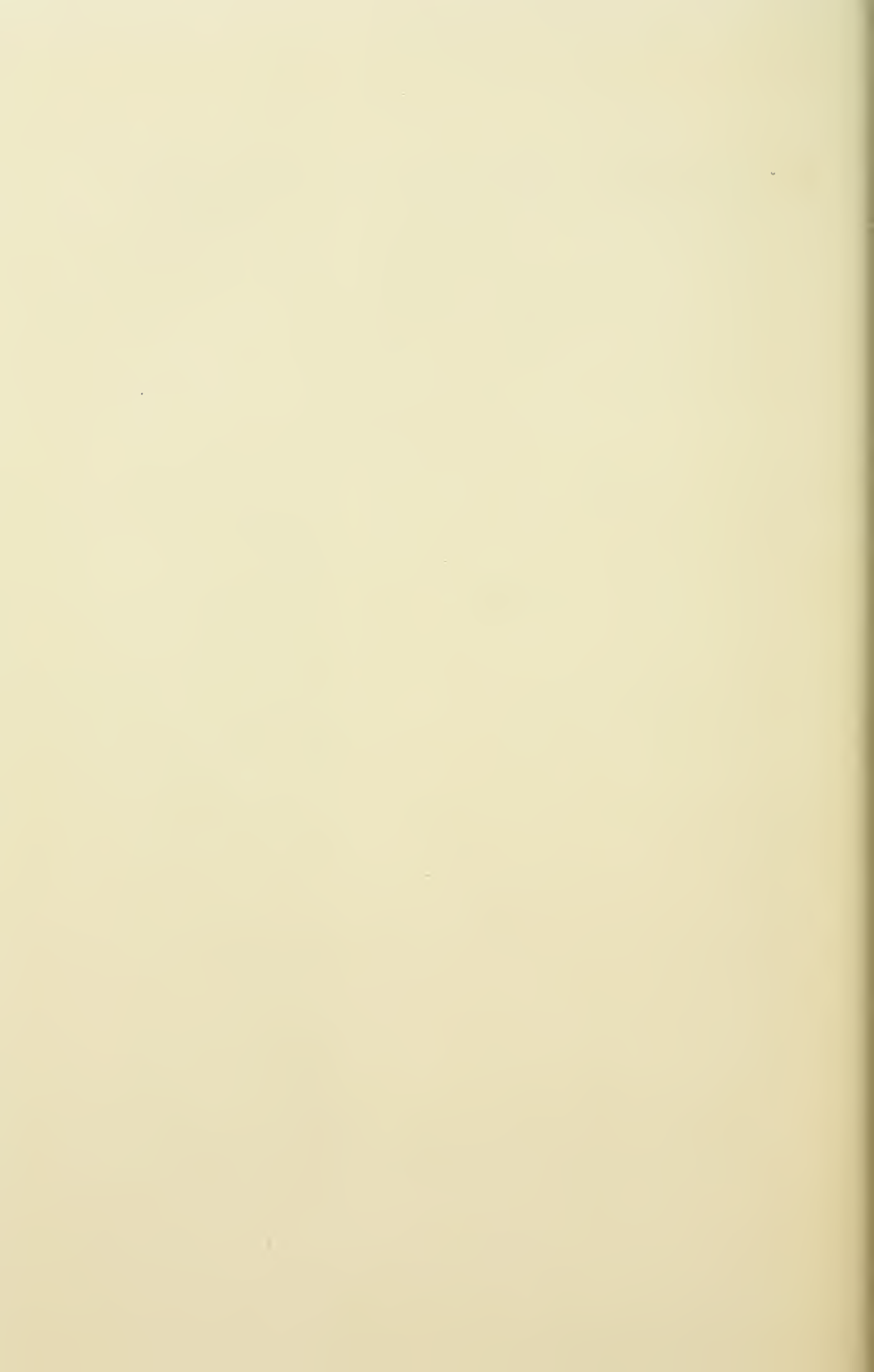
An ancient
sanction for
a modern
ideal

This educational ideal which the first half of the twentieth century will doubtless in a large measure realize, received its classic and practically perfect statement 2,300 years ago. But the great thinker who saw and expressed the truth with marvellous clearness did not find the public prepared for his teaching. Furthermore, his native country, a little city state, was soon overwhelmed in the conflicts between great military empires. His teaching, however, has remained to inspire humanity's leaders in all succeeding times. We have a new and deep sense of the oneness of our race when we realize that we are just about to achieve the aspiration of Plato, which he expressed on one of the greatest pages of "The Republic." He says that in a state which consciously aims at fostering the best life, those who create the environment for the young will be required to "express the image of the good in all their works," and to exclude "the opposite forms of vice and intemperance, and meanness and indecency," lest the taste of the citizens be corrupted. The young people must not "grow up amid images of moral deformity, as in some noxious pasture, and there browse and feed upon many a baneful herb day by day, little by little, until they silently gather a festering mass of corruption in their own souls." The task of the educator and the legislator is to arrange that "our youth shall dwell in the land of health, amid fair sights and sounds, and receive the good in everything; and beauty, the effluence of fair works, shall flow into the eye and ear, like a health-giving breeze from a purer region, and insensibly draw the soul from its earliest years into likeness and sympathy with the beauty of reason."



EVENING AT ISLE ADAM

After the Painting by Jules Dupré.
In the Art Institute of Chicago.



XXXIII

HOW I EDUCATED MY CHILDREN AT HOME

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MY father had been a teacher before me, and I began my career as a tutor at the age of twelve. I became a teacher in the Kansas City High School at twenty years of age, and have been connected with the profession of teaching for thirty-eight years. Long before my eldest son was born I had been applying what I considered to be rational educational methods in the instruction of languages and mathematics to the young, and I had hoped some day to prove my ideas to the full in the case of my own children.

My son, Norbert, was born November 26, 1894. From his first days, and more cautiously still from the moment he began to lisp, his mother and I never spoke that silly baby talk to him which passes for a language of parental affection, but expressed ourselves in the ordinary, intelligent way of social intercourse. As soon as he responded to the recital of rhythmic speech, his mother read to him Mary Mapes Dodge's "Rhymes and Jingles" and such other simple verse as could be culled from the standard poets. Hours had frequently to be passed in repeating to him the poems by which he was fascinated, and tears would fill his eyes when he listened to the last line of Poe's "Raven," "Only this and nothing more," which seemed to presage a cessation of his pleasure, and

he would mutter the word "more," one of the first he learned to speak, and the verses had to be gone over and over again.

Before he was eighteen months old he had already heard a mass of good, simple prose, in addition to his poetry, and it needed an external impetus for him to express a desire to read. This came about in the following manner. We were at the seashore, and his nurse amused him by tracing the letters of the alphabet in the sand. In two days he had learned practically the whole alphabet, but we did not encourage his reading until he was three years old. Meanwhile he became acquainted with good literature, at least with the sound of it, to which I added such scientific information as was accessible to his age. The knowledge was not distorted or diluted, but merely divested of useless verbiage, and he acquired precise information on physics, chemistry, botany, under the guise of stories. It was not intended that he should fully grasp each idea, but that he should from earliest childhood become accustomed to direct answers in response to his questioning mind, from which at his own psychological moments he would arrange his world philosophy. No matter what explanation is given to a child about the phenomena which he observes, he rearranges the facts to suit his own fancy, but if he constantly receives the one correct information, he is able at the critical moment, which no teacher can foresee, to draw from his stored up knowledge that which aids him to evolve his philosophy.

When Norbert was three years old, his mother began to teach him reading. He slipped into the habit of reading correctly, with a minimum of spelling lessons, apparently because he had, from his

knowledge of the letters, been guessing at the words, even long ones, before he had begun the real task of reading. He recognized the words as a whole and, although he practically never learned to spell, he rarely made mistakes in writing when later he learned to write. Reading by himself became his obsession, not so much from any innate inclination as from the fact that for any childish transgression we deprived him of his books. Whereas the ordinary child is punished by being obliged to study, thus learning to look upon intellectual pursuits as tasks, Norbert considered it the greatest humiliation to be intellectually idle. At the age of four he devoured popular works on natural history and other sciences, fairy tales and poetry, but with a decided leaning toward the exact sciences. Long scientific terms did not daunt him, though he frequently pronounced them in a quaint and ludicrous manner. But in our talks and in talks with elder friends who took interest in him, he gradually rectified his errors without passing through the useless ordeal of concentrated spelling tortures. He learned to write, but a weakness of his wrist prevented his becoming an elegant penman, wherefore we, indeed, continued to instruct him in penmanship, but without that unfortunate insistence which, in the public school, would have made his life a burden and would have lowered his interest in work in general.

At seven years of age he was in the fourth grade of the public schools, whither we sent him for the sake of child companionship. His real education was taking place at home. For his amusement, he was reading Darwin, Rileot, anything and everything that promised answers to his questioning mind. History, philosophy, botany, zoology, everything interested

him, and all I had to do was surreptitiously to put the best, most authentic works in his way, so as to have him form his intellectual habits on what was correct. I say I had to do it surreptitiously, for he had been learning to put his own questions and to select his own answers from among conflicting authorities, and so in rejecting what appeared to him to be attempts at outside instruction, which is the essence of real scholarship, I encouraged him. His school work was merely nominal, and I wanted him placed where he intellectually belonged, in the seventh or eighth grade. For three weeks I pleaded in vain with the principal, who could measure the boy only by the school yardstick. The burden of all his arguments was that Norbert did not know the multiplication table. That was quite true. I had been instilling in him the mystery of the numbers, had been teaching him how to derive one set of multiplication products out of another, to juggle with squares of binomials, etc., and allowed his multiplication table to grow by experience and practice, while at the school the children are graded only by the rapidity of mental reflexes with which their brain responds to sudden multiplication questions. It was useless to argue longer with the principal, and so I took Norbert out of school.

Just then we discovered that Norbert, like myself, was congenitally myopic, and his oculist did not want him to use his eyes for reading for the term of six months. To keep him intellectually satisfied, I arranged a chemical laboratory for him, and a Harvard chemistry assistant came two or three times a week and gave him instruction in university chemistry with complete experiments. I employed a Radcliffe student to read under my direction to Norbert, Bury's "Ancient History," "Latin Grammar" and

"Cæsar," and I attended to his mathematics and other subjects. Within one year we worked through college algebra, geometry, trigonometry and analytical geometry, and in his other subjects he was far in advance of two years' high school work. In his physical condition he was just like any ordinary child of his age, out playing with boys, and indulging in their childish fancies. It was then that an incident occurred which showed how his historic knowledge mingled with his childlike enthusiasm. He and two of his companions armed themselves with clubs and marched down to a wharf, to board a ship, with the firm intention of going to Turkey and ousting the Turks from Europe. After a long search I intercepted the warlike trio as they were wistfully eyeing the display behind the window of a candy shop.

To escape the ill advised and even malicious criticisms of those who heard of my son's progress, I removed to the country. I thus not only ridded him of the blighting influence of the limelight, but also gave my children healthy, natural surroundings. To avoid a possible future accusation that my children were brought up under a special dispensation, I placed them once more in the public schools, Norbert entering the third year of the high school at the age of nine. His real education, as before, took place at home, for under my supervision the subjects were inculcated in such a way as to reduce the mechanical school training to a minimum.

In his linguistic work I continued to apply my method. I never corrected any mistake made in a translation, but only hinted at its presence somewhere, generally not even indicating the particular sentence. At first it was a severe task on the boy, but very soon he learned to control himself, to analyze every word, to be definitely sure of his correct pas-

sages, and to scrutinize more closely those in which he did not have definite knowledge. Thus he learned to think for himself and to get a firm grasp on his languages, which the school boy rarely acquires. He only needed my moral support, my encouragement, my stern displeasure with senseless blunders, to be urged on to higher endeavors. The gain was enormous. In a few months he became so sure of himself that it took but a few minutes to do a lesson. I similarly saved him an immense amount of time by not allowing him to use the dictionary for his Latin and German. He translated directly to me, I serving as the dictionary only in exceptional cases, and doubtful words were guessed at by references to etymology or by scrutiny of the context. Occasionally I read the passages to him, and he had to respond as quickly as he heard them. Here the same results were obtained as in the translations. At first, for but a short time, the labor of overcoming inertia was very great, but soon the saving of time and the growth of efficiency made it possible for him to get a lesson ready in ten or fifteen minutes. In mathematics, he merely reviewed what he had learned with me before, and the rapid survey which I had made of the several branches enabled him clearly to understand the need for precise mathematical processes, such as the school boy in his snail's pace rarely gets.

In two years Norbert graduated at the head of his class. Meanwhile he had been grounding himself in advanced work in the sciences, to which his tramps with me through the country had added a share. We were passionate mushroom hunters, and as I supplied him with the most explicit and scientific works on mycology, he soon became an expert mycologist and practical botanist. It became neces-

sary to move back to the city, to give my children the advantage of higher schools. Again to avoid the limelight and self-chosen critics I moved to the city of Medford in the neighborhood of Tufts College, where Norbert entered as a full-fledged freshman, after passing additional examinations in zoology and botany, for which he had had no other training than what he had given himself. Later, in his third year, he at a moment's notice, similarly passed an examination in organic chemistry, which he had picked up somewhere between school hours and playing.

In three years, Norbert graduated from college almost at the head of his class. He entered the Graduate School of Harvard University, devoting himself for a year to biology. Then he studied one year at Cornell and two years at Harvard. I had insisted, during his college life, that he should not follow the pernicious method of note taking in vogue among students, but should learn to listen and verify later the information received by references to original works. Some of his teachers foresaw nothing but failure for him, if he did not follow the usual course; but while other students were getting second-hand wisdom from garbled notes, Norbert verified his teacher's lectures from the latest authorities, and his examination tests soon convinced his professors that there were other roads to knowledge than notes.

Norbert is ready to get his doctor's degree in philosophy as soon as he has passed some final examinations and has had his thesis accepted. He is being graded, not by his years, but by his positive knowledge. No favors have ever been asked for him—he had to stand on his own legs. He boasts of some advantages over his mates. He has read Plato in the original and freely consults mathematical and philosophic works in German, French, Italian and

Latin, and if the opportunity offered itself, would tackle Spanish as well. Having begun the study of higher mathematics at eleven, he, during his plastic years, acquired that mastery of the algebra of logic which men ten years older grapple for in vain, and, what is most important, he will not be carried away by an ignis fatuus of philosophical doctrines, no matter by what academic authority supported. He lives and thinks his own thoughts, weighing ideas with inexorable logic, and is slave to no coterie. But this is not the only effect of training in independent thought. He has learned from earliest childhood to apply the same inexorable logic to his own acts, and he is as stern a judge of his own morals as of his thoughts. Nobody knows his own faults better than he himself, and no one corrects them better than he does; but he also knows when he is right, and conscious lapses from the straight road are as unlikely as the acceptance of a logical fallacy. At the same time his outdoor life, his tramps in the summer, his wholesome habits, have kept him in splendid physical trim, without the useless overexertion of athletics, and at eighteen he weighs 170 pounds, and is the equal of any boy of his age in endurance. He has been trained to be a natural, healthy, intellectual boy, and the future is before him.

What I have done with my son, I have, in a measure, accomplished with my two daughters. My eldest, Constance, will enter Radcliffe at the age of fifteen, having undergone nearly the same training. My second, Bertha, will graduate from the Latin High School at the age of thirteen. Like their brother, they have learned to get a firm grasp on their subjects, to control their own thoughts, to be their own severest judges, and like his, their physical, mental, and moral showing are of the best.

XXXIV

THE PROFESSION OF FATHERHOOD

FRANKLIN K. MATHIEWS

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HAVE a friend who is supervisor of a home and school for dependent boys. Every now and again the *wanderlust* seizes some boy and he runs away. Of late this has occurred so often that at chapel the announcement was made that in so much as such action on the part of these boys brought undeserved censure to the whole school, something radical must be done. The supervisor said that the next boy who ran away, should they be fortunate enough to overtake him, would be soundly spanked. A little time afterward, a boy disappeared in the old familiar way. He was caught and returned to the school. The supervisor interviewed him in his office and administered the promised discipline. At first, there was very little reaction, for the fact is the boy had known in his short life little else than thrashings and beatings. Finally, though, real tears began to fall. The spanking over, the boy started for the door, still crying. Suddenly, he turned about, rushed toward the supervisor, threw his arms about his neck and said, "Oh, Mr. Brown, I love you. You make me think of my father."

What is the father's function in the rearing of children? A writer in a popular magazine answers by saying that it is analogous to the relation a captain sustains to his ship. Ordinarily, the captain is

What is the
father's
function in
child rearing?

not very busy; the other under officers seem to be taking care of things. But, when the storm comes, or some other crisis arises, it's the captain who takes command. So it is in the home. The routine instruction and training of the children are in the hands of the mother but when there is some grave problem to be settled, some critical issue to be met, some severe discipline to be administered, the father steps in to contribute his share.

The analogy is happy and rather well states the situation as it too often is. But, surely, the father's relation ought to be more vital, more sympathetic than that. To be effective, any influence for character development must be constant, repetitious. In the instruction and training of children in the home, there should be a daily program in the planning and execution of which both father and mother share. In the realest sense, the father should be head over his own household, tremendously concerned in all its welfare. He should give as much time and thought to home problems as to other affairs that seem to be more important, yet, measured by right standards, are not to be compared with the high and holy duties of the home.

I hear someone saying, "All that is very beautiful in theory, good enough for other times, but it is different now. Men are so busy." So it is different now. The time was when men took themselves seriously as fathers and properly functioned in the home. The time was in our country when the home was the center of our life—industrially, educationally, religiously, socially, recreationally—but that type of home has passed or is fast passing away, and lest we judge the father too severely, let us stop to

Influence for
character
must be
constant

Are men too
busy to be
real fathers?

consider the causes that have, to a very large extent, brought about this change.

We are too apt to think of this transformation as an isolated fact when, in reality, it is only part of a universal movement. The new knowledge has brought a like change to all our institutional life and invention has revolutionized business. So rapid has been the improvement in business that the manufacturing, the producing end, has outstripped the executive, the managing side of industry. Only recently have "Efficiency Engineers" been bringing the last mentioned department up to the highest state of efficiency. So it has been with the home. The development of the community activities have been so rapid and so far-reaching that the home influence has suffered a temporary lapse, and the problem that confronts us as a people is to bring back the old-time efficiency of the home.

I have no notion that we can bring back the old home but I am sure we can resurrect its spirit. The spirit of the old home was to magnify the worth of the child, to have a constant interest in all of what pertained to its welfare. This concern may not always have expressed itself in the most intelligent way judged by modern standards, but it was very genuine, very sincere; there was a passionate desire to serve the best interests of the child. The need of our American homes today is to reproduce this passionate concern for children. It is true that the activities upon the children's behalf that once centered in the home have passed into the hands of outside agencies. Home education has been supplanted by the Public School system; the religious instruction of children has been handed over to the church; social activities find numerous other places for their expression, such

We can
resurrect the
spirit of the
old home

as the Y. M. C. A., the Y. W. C. A., social settlements, the civic centers of the public schools, public playgrounds and other recreational centers.

**Fathers must
be concerned
in children's
outside
activities**

And with all of these outside agencies doing such thorough work, it's very natural to say, "What's the use?" The answer is that it is in proportion as fathers are concerned about their children in all of these outside activities that they may reproduce the spirit of the old home. Fathers should be in closest touch with every man or woman who, working through these agencies, is doing such splendid things for boys. It is not enough that mothers co-operate. Better still, fathers should give their enthusiastic support. It is well that the Mothers' Congress did not inaugurate *mother-teacher* associations. The responsibility for a vital interest in the children at school rests upon father and mother alike. Moreover, the father and mother should be equally concerned about the child not only in the public school but in the church, at the Y. M. C. A., on the playground, in the library, or wherever else the child may go to normally express himself. There should be not only parent-teacher associations to support the work of the public school but similar organizations should be inaugurated to make more effective the work of the Sunday school, the Y. M. C. A., the playground, the Boy Scout movement, etc.

When fathers support the community child welfare activities in this way, they will be quick to see that all the environmental life of the child should be controlled, i. e., at all times the child should be intelligently guided and governed; that it is not enough that we should influence the child through the instruction and training of the several community activities, all these good efforts should be

supplemented and complemented by the same thorough-going effort in the home. In the home, the parents should work with the same knowledge, the same methods, the same splendid purpose to stimulate and nourish the child's physical and emotional and mental development.

Such a declaration brings us face to face with the need for a profession both of motherhood and of fatherhood. When we think of any profession, we think of a course of study, of knowledge in a particular field, systematized, organized into sciences. We are coming, or better still, we have come, to the time when we may well speak of the profession of fatherhood or the profession of motherhood. For there's a knowledge of the child, its physical and emotional and mental constitution that is as definite and thorough-going as other branches of knowledge. It is the business of both fathers and mothers to acquaint themselves with these facts that they may with intelligence guard and guide their children in the way they should go.

**Fatherhood
as a
profession**

The father should have a working knowledge of a boy's body, its physiology and certain pathological conditions that from time to time arise, and the relation of these both to mentality and morality; should understand the effect of normal growth upon the boy's character development, particularly during the period of adolescence; be able to give instruction in sex hygiene, knowing just what to tell and how much and just when to tell it; understand the supreme worth of muscular co-ordination in relation to self-control and how through manual training, gymnastics and athletics these are both developed.

**A working
knowledge
of the
physical boy**

Then, there is the emotional nature to be considered. Says an eminent psychologist: "The wild life

**Of his
emotional
nature**

of the race is caged in the cerebro-nervous system of the veriest child." Which means that in order to understand the boy and work with and for him intelligently, fathers must have some knowledge of his instinctive equipment—the instincts of fear and anger and love, the instincts of imitation and curiosity, the sex instinct, the play instinct, the acquisitive instinct; possess such a knowledge of these as to understand when the boy is most under their sway; and how to utilize them for the boy's advantage either in imparting knowledge or developing character. Also, he must know the relation of the instinct-feelings to heredity, to the developing of personality and their value in directing the boy vocationally. Attention, too, should be given to the "gang," why it is that at one time the boy is so profoundly influenced by it and how this gang loyalty may be best used in educating and disciplining the boy. Moreover fathers should learn why it is that at one period of his development the boy has thoughts only of himself, while at another period the instinctive tendency toward altruism is so strong that often self-sacrifice with him becomes a pleasure; should know enough about the boy to understand why it is that he so dearly loves a joke yet, at the same time, may be so easily led into a most profound personal religious experience.

Of his mental
life

Nor is that all, the mental life of the boy must be reckoned with. Fathers should know enough psychology to discover whether their boys are motor or sensory minded; should understand the place imagination plays in provoking in the boy the splendid qualities of initiative and self-reliance; should know just when and why it is that at a particular time the boy begins to think and act for himself, and why it is the

youth so often questions all authority and darkening doubts so easily beset his soul. It should be the business of the father to acquaint himself with these facts, that he may intelligently and sympathetically guide and control his boy. Here is where a little knowledge is a helpful thing. Such knowledge will make fathers competent to develop the resources with which nature has endowed the boy; help them to determine those life issues which "when taken at the flood lead on to fortune."

The carrying out of such a program will take much time, there can be no doubt of that, but with equal assurance it may be said the rewards will be simply inestimable. "Knowledge is power," always has been, always will be. Such knowledge would bring a new sympathy for and a greater patience with the boy. Fathers would know then how to live *with* their children as well as *for* their children; would realize that in every child there is a will not to be broken but first of all to be understood, that is, rightly interpreted, and administered as a sacred trust. Then they would read in their Bibles not only "Children, obey your parents" but, what follows, "Parents, provoke not your children to wrath."

"Of such stuff are dreams made," say some. And the answer is, the morning cometh, daylight is already breaking, the time is at hand when such dreams will come true. Already there are many signs of promise. The wide-spread interest men are taking in eugenics and the teaching of sex hygiene, and the winning fight against the social evil now being waged by so many agencies in which men are found among the most ardent supporters, all these things foretell the dawning day. Moreover, fathers all over the country are very much interested in the parent-

Dreams
coming true

teacher associations of the Mothers' Congress; and, somewhat analogous to these, are the fathers' and sons' banquets now being promoted so successfully by the Y. M. C. A. throughout the entire nation. The Boy Scout movement is also numbering among its many thousand Scout Masters, hundreds of fathers anxious to do the best not only for their own boys, but for the boy life of the whole community.

The fact is, men, fathers are interested in their children, very much interested. If they turn the upbringing of children over to the mothers, it is not so much because they wish to escape the responsibility, but rather because knowing full well how great the responsibility is, possessing unbounded confidence in the mothers' ability, they commit this sacred trust into their hands. What is needed, then, is a strong urge on the part of the well-informed mother that the father should share in her knowledge of child-life and join with her in helping to direct the welfare work for boys and girls both within and without the home. In a word, it's "up to the woman."

If she takes advantage of every opportunity to become a well trained mother, first she will demonstrate by practice the possibility of the profession of motherhood. When by the mother's expert knowledge, vital problems are solved, most difficult questions answered, great responsibilities well met, fathers will be obliged to see that there must be something in it. And if something in it for the mother, why not equally for the father? Why not a profession of fatherhood as well as a profession of motherhood? Why should they not both together, working with the same motive, the same methods, the same principles and practices, instruct and train *their* children?

Such co-operation, such a co-partnership in the home, would truly make the twentieth century the century of the child, as it has sometimes been called. In the nineteenth century, scientists, by new methods of learning, discovered the forces and energies and powers of nature, learned how to use them, govern and control them in the doing of the world's work. Out of it all has come a material progress such as the world has never known. But the end is not yet. By the same methods of learning, we are discovering the infinite resources of human nature, particularly as regards childhood. We are learning that within the veriest child there are potential forces, energies that, once understood, governed, guided, will work a miracle, almost, in the child's development. And when this knowledge is more universally applied, when fathers and mothers think of parenthood as a profession, as something for which there must be careful preparation; and, as by such preparation fathers and mothers together, with master touch, work with and upon the child when the mind is wax to receive and marble to retain, through such adequate training will be realized that "coming generation" which seers have seen and of which prophets have foretold and poets sung.

"Ring bells in unreaired steeples,
The voice of unborn peoples,
Your triumph is my own."

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